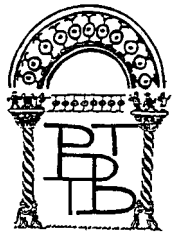


Alexios I Komnenos

edited by Margaret Mullett and Dion Smythe

I
Papers

BELFAST BYZANTINE TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS, 4.1

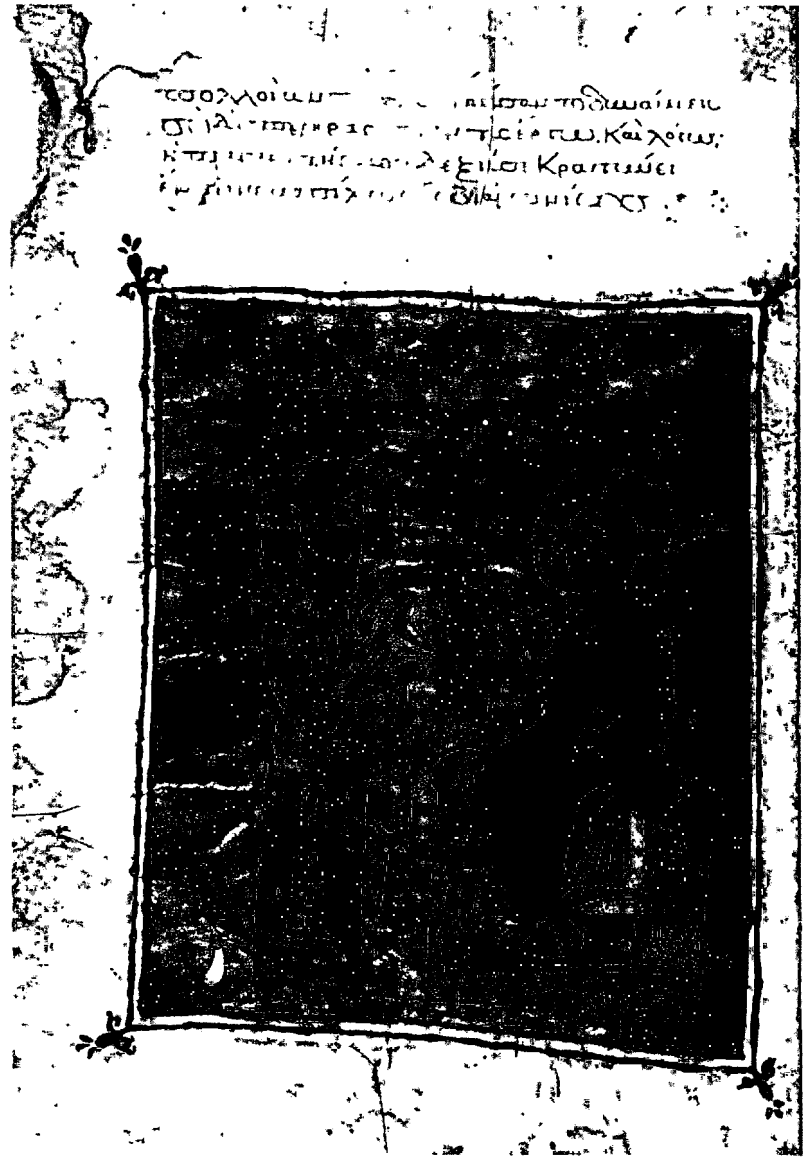
1996

Papers of the second Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium, 14-16 April 1989

Alphabetikon for Alexios

A ll kings' proud boast, enkindler and bearer of light,
B eauty's bloom you are, delight of rulers.
C ountries all rejoice in your successes;
D avid most gentle can lawfully be likened to you.
E ver our hope (after God), our strength &
F astness, ceaselessly plucking from the storm
all who are beneath your hand,
G leaming sun, star of the inhabited world,
H appily flourishing & revelling always in all your virtues,
I nstructing Christ's armies with inspired command,
J ostling, you trampled upon the ranks of the barbarians.
K ill the insolence of the children of Hagar;
L ift yourself on high when you have annihilated them;
M ake a trophy for victory as conqueror three times over
N ow you have made your enemies exiles from their own land,
O verwhelmed in grief for their enslavement by your divine power.
P reviously they rebelled against your inheritance,
Q uestioning it in murderous ways, words and deeds,
R uler, great Komnenian bringer of light,
S upporting pillar of piety, kings' proud boast,
T aming with your sword & awful bow
U nruly tribes of strange-tongued Persian barbarians
V ictoriously rejoicing that they are below the yoke of your
power most divine.
W ith David that we should all sing
X cellent hymns of praise—for this, emperor Alexios,
Y ou prepare, whom we call upon
Z estfully to live for many years.

Stephen Physopalamites, ed. C. Welz, tr. M.J. McGann



Alexios presents the *Panoplia dogmatike* to Christ
Vat.gr.666, fol. 2v

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In memory of Joseph A.M. Sonderkamp

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Editor's preface

This volume began life as a colloquium held at Portaferry on 14-16 April 1989 with the brief of reevaluating the rule of Alexios I Komnenos. It was attended by economic and ecclesiastical historians, Roman lawyers, textual critics, an art historian and an archaeologist, from Greece, Cyprus, Belgium, Germany as well as Ireland and UK. It was organised by a splendid team of ten student *sebastoi* (gaffer Michael Guiney, cook Tony Simpson) under the guidance of Paula McMullan (*protovestiaria* and housekeeper) and Barbara Hill (*chartophylax*). Betty Robinson, as well as creating this text series, transformed the house, kindly lent to us by Dr Boaden of the Marine Biology Centre, with flowers and pictures; Christine Robertson worked and thought us through the weekend. We are very grateful also to Anna Wilson and Clemence Schultze for their designs. As at all our colloquia we provided both archaeological and literary stimulus: Bruce Campbell led an expedition to the tower-houses of Strangford, and seminars in London, Brussels, St Andrews and Belfast had prepared materials for an afternoon seminar on the *Mousai*; Charlotte Roueché, Patricia Karlin-Hayter and Robert Jordan worked indefatigably. (I shall say nothing of the Cuparensis fragment.) The colloquium could not have happened at all without the support of our sponsors: the Northern Bank, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Arthur Guinness, The Society for Promotion of Byzantine Studies and the Society for Promotion of Hellenic Studies. Every colloquium has its hero, and Dion Smythe was the hero of this one—and of the many challenges of transforming it into print.

Janis Boyd and Fiona Wilson keyed accurately and swiftly. Gail Nicholl began the work of copy-editing as her diploma project and she was greatly assisted by Anthony Kirby. At a point when we despaired of completion, Paul Magdalino and St Andrews stepped into the breach with the skilful and accurate help of Shaun Tougher. His index, as well as the plates and acknowledgements for support in publication, will be found in the second volume. Margaret Kenny designed the jacket as a computer project and Ernest McConville gave us his enthusiasm and printer's imagination. As always, I am grateful to the sharp eyes of Estelle Haan, Robert Jordan and Michael McGann and to the indispensable presence of Anthony Sheehan, whose Arts Computing Unit has transformed our lives.

Margaret Mullett, General Editor, BBTT March 1996

1

Introduction: Alexios the enigma

Margaret Mullett

The colloquium at Portaferry began with the realisation that no monograph on Alexios has appeared since Chalandon's in 1900[1] and that views on Alexios have tended to diverge radically in recent years. For Ahrweiler he is the providential saviour who snatched the empire from the jaws of defeat, rebuilding the navy and overhauling the local government system.[2] For Lemerle he is rather a false *deus ex machina* who turned the empire away from its eleventh-century path of peace and prosperity down the rocky slopes which led to 1204.[3] This is a more sophisticated version of the view which sees the trading concessions to the Venetians as the *fons et origo* of Byzantium's woes. For Hendy, building not only on his studies of the coinage but also on the work of Darrouzès and Oikonomides in particular on administrative change, Alexios is the great reformer—though recent years have shown us how double-edged a description that can be.[4] Michael Angold warns us against talking about a revolution in government: 'Alexios remained true to the system of government he inherited. He patched

[1] F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène, Études sur l'empire byzantin aux XIe et XIIe siècles, I, Essai sur le règne d'Alexis Ier Comnène (1081-1118)* (Paris, 1900).

[2] H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIe -XVe siècles* (Paris, 1966), 175-225.

[3] P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Le monde byzantin, Paris, 1977), 251-312.

[4] M.F. Hendy, *Coinage and money in the Byzantine empire. 1081-1261* (DOS, 12, Washington, DC, 1969); *The economy, fiscal administration and coinage of Byzantium* (Northampton, 1989); N. Oikonomides, 'L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au XIe siècle (1025-1118)', *TM*, 6 (1976), 125-152; J. Darrouzès, *Recherches sur les 'Οφφίκια de l'église byzantine* (Paris, 1970).

it up and made it work.'[5] Yet others would be prepared to talk of a Komnenian revolution which goes far beyond the overhaul of titles and so-called 'clan government'. Whom are we to believe?

We all recognise however that the end of the eleventh century marks a crucial period in the history of Byzantium, when the empire had begun to come to terms with not only the new factor of the Seljuk Turks but also the new factor of the Normans, something well understood in the home of the colloquium in Norman County Down. That we do not speak of the Norman conquest of Albania as we do of the Norman invasion of Ireland may make Alexios's achievements worthy of our scrutiny. In fact at the colloquium we turned to praise of Alexios; the papers were organised on Menandrian lines according to the specification for the *basilikos logos*, the encomium of the emperor.[6]

We began, properly, with *patris*. The eleventh century is a time when country houses in the provinces began to look less attractive than the lights of Constantinople, and we asked where was his ancestral home, and whether he tried to recreate it in Constantinople at the Blachernai. James Crow, for reasons of *genos*, was not able to be with us, but Stephen Hill was able to give Crow's paper, and talk to his slides, supplemented by his own experience of fieldwork in Paphlagonia. We are grateful to both of them, and to Crow[7] for working up the subject further for this volume.

Genos then concerned us. The role of the family has been coupled with *patris* as an overwhelming concern of the period,[8] and indeed of Alexian government. Hohlweg spotted Alexios's penchant for putting inadequate members of his family in crucial strategic commands;[9] Stiernon in a brilliant series of articles[10] pre-

[5] M.J. Angold, *The Byzantine empire, 1025-1204: a political history* (London, 1984), 133.

[6] Menander, Rhetor, *Peri epideiktikon*, ed. tr. D. Russell and N. Wilson (Oxford, 1981), 76-94.

[7] See below, Crow, 12-36.

[8] P. Magdalino, 'Honour among Rhomaioi: the framework of social values in the world of Digenes Akrites and Kekaumenos', *BMGS*, 13 (1989), 183-218.

[9] A. Hohlweg, *Beiträge zur Verwaltungsgeschichte des oströmische Reiches unter den Komnenen* (MiscByzMonac, 1, Munich, 1965).

pared the groundwork for many further studies. Oikonomides and the rest of the *Table ronde* of 1974 proposed the notion of clan government,[11] which I argue elsewhere is a misnomer.[12] Certainly without the activities of the two arch-matchmakers John caesar Doukas and Anna Dalassene it is unlikely that a colloquium could have been held at all on Alexios, but that is another question. Barzos's monumental prosopography makes it possible to look at one middle Byzantine family in enormous detail and apply anthropological techniques of kinship analysis; the recent work of Ruth Macrides has brought us a long way in a short time. More is needed, including an interactionist approach which shows the family in action: parent-child relationships, sibling relationships, intergenerational relationships; there is a great deal to be done, perhaps as part of a wider network study of the period. Menander, however, passes over this rather hurriedly: 'after disposing thus of the topic of his origin, inquire next about the birth of the emperor himself'. It must be carefully noted that if we find ourselves able to conceal lack of repute by some technical device we must do just this; if there is no technical resource we must omit the topic. At the colloquium indeed we had no formal paper on the family, perhaps because Dumbarton Oaks had timetabled a colloquium on that subject for shortly afterwards. But paper after paper picked up the question: changes in administration to accommodate the family, using national wealth as a family resource, Alexios leaving the patronage of monasteries to his womenfolk, Alexios as dominated by these women. So it is appropriate that Barbara Hill, who was present as a research student at the colloquium, should have filled the formal gap with a paper for the volume on Alexios and the imperial women.[13]

On *genesis*, *physis* and *anatrophe*, Menander is more forthcoming, but our sources are not. 'Straight from the labour of his

[10] L. Stiernon, 'Notes de prosopographie et de titulature byzantines, 1-5', *REB* 19 (1961), 273-283; 21 (1963), 178-198; 22 (1964), 184-198; 23 (1965), 222-243; 24 (1966), 89-96.

[11] N. Oikonomides, 'L'évolution'.

[12] M.E. Mullett, 'The "disgrace"of the ex-basilissa Maria', *BS*, 45 (1984), 202-211.

[13] See below, Hill, 37-55.

mother's womb he shone forth radiant in beauty, dazzling the visible universe, rivalling the fairest star in the sky.' Even Anna does not go so far (but then she is not writing panegyric); there is though a surprising lack of information about the early life of the Komnenoi, and we were drawn to look at the nature of those sources. In particular we spent an evening discussing the radical thesis of James Howard-Johnston, which I believe will continue to be discussed for a long time. Everyone of course had something to say about Anna; Jonathan Shepard had offered us a paper on Anna and the past but was sadly unable to come; Graham Loud examined Anna's treatment of the Normans, which has found a home elsewhere,[14] but Dion Smythe[15] has nobly slanted his study of heretics under Alexios in this direction for the volume. There is so much still to be explained about the *Alexiad*: both its genre and its gender need analysis, though both are touched on below.[16] There are basic problems about its structure which remain unsolved. Not everything can be explained by Buckler's identification of errors and inconsistencies, nor by distance in time and Anna's isolation as James Howard-Johnston makes clear. An issue of importance is how deliberate that structure is: the classic question is the Bogomil trial. Why is it transposed to a prominent position in Book XV, fifteen years out of chronological order?[17] As a matter of style? or of image-making?[18] Or to mask a messy case of heresy possibly connected with the succession crisis at the end of Alexios's reign?[19] We also need to see the *Alexiad* not as a work of

[14] G. A. Loud, 'Anna Komnena and her sources for the Normans of southern Italy' *Church and chronicle in the middle ages. Essays presented to John Taylor*, ed. I. Wood and G.A. Loud (London, 1991), 41-57.

[15] 232-259.

[16] See below, Howard-Johnston, 260-302.

[17] The date of the Bogomil trial is neatly fixed before the death of the *sebastokrator* Isaac by D. Papachryssanthou, 'La date de la mort du sébastocrator Isaac Comnène, frère d'Alexis I, et de quelques événements contemporains', *REB*, 21 (1963), 250-255.

[18] For a reading of Book XV see my 'Alexios I Komnenos and imperial renewal', *New Constantines: the rhythm of imperial renewal in Byzantium, 4th -13th centuries*, ed. P. Magdalino (SPBS, 2, Aldershot, 1994), 259-267.

[19] For the trial of Eustratios see P. Joannou, 'Trois pièces;' 'Der Nominalismus und die menschliche Psychologie Christi. Das semeioma gegen Eustratios von

the reign of Alexios but in response to productions of the mid-twelfth century; this will be considered in our second volume, as well as the puzzling question of Alexios's education.

Menander then turns to *epitedeumata* and the question of *philanthropia*. This seems to me to open questions of patronage both in literature and in art. We are unusually well equipped with portraits of Alexios in both literature and art, but the issue of patronage is more complex. Although so many contributors at the colloquium wanted to talk about literature that there was no room for me to offer a paper, the literary patronage of Alexios at first sight appears unpromising territory. Alexios flourished in the period after the intellectual and philosophical revival of the eleventh century and before the 'Age of Manuel', or the 'Komnenian Renaissance'. And he has been portrayed as a military backwoodsman who knew nothing about literature but knew what he liked—or did not. It needs to be demonstrated that literature flourished under Alexios. Some case[20] can be made. Theophylact's letter-collection and much of his large oeuvre falls into the reign of Alexios, as do works of Niketas ὁ τοῦ Σερρῶν, and the occasional poetry of Nicholas Kallikles. We are unclear about the writing of history in the period, but Skylitzes and Attaleiates are candidates, and Psellos may still have been alive. A new genre was born, the panoply of heresies, written to Alexios's order by Euthymios Zigabenos and later emulated by Andronikos Kamateros and Niketas Choniates. To at least one twelfth-century writer[21] Theodore of Smyrna was the dominant figure, many of whose works have not survived. Other works written to imperial order do survive: Stephen Physopalamites's alphabet and John Xiphilinos II's hagiographical collection, for example. But rather than concentrate on known authors of Alexios's reign speakers at the weekend chose texts less firmly dated and used a method of synkrisis which

Nikaia (1117)', *BZ*, 47 (1954), 358-378; 'Le sort des évêques hérétiques reconciliés: un discours inédit de Nicétas de Serres contre Eustrate de Nicée', *B*, 28 (1958), 1-30.

[20] See ch. 2.6 in my *Theophylact: reading the letters of a Byzantine archbishop* (BBOM, 2, Aldershot, forthcoming).

[21] *Timarion*, ch. 23-24, 573-627, ed. R. Romano, *Timarione* (Byz et NeohellNap, 2, Naples, 1974), 70-72.

Menander would have applauded. Roderick Beaton[22] looked at the milieu of *Digenes* and of *Timarion;* Catia Galatariotou did as much for Kekaumenos and *Digenes*. Charlotte Roueché examined the rich parainetic literature of the period and its background; this will appear in *Alexios I Komnenos,* II. According to our contributors, rather than by boring polemic or poems ordered by the inch, the period is characterised by the return of fiction, wild flights of fantasy, sex and violence, satirical contemporary comment and practical advice. It was seen as a worthy forerunner of the experiments of the twelfth century, which surely none of us any more regard as 'an age of uncreative erudition, of sterile good taste'.[23] But we must also ask whether any of this had anything to do with Alexios, since our knowledge of the patronage pattern of the period is still, despite the efforts of Robin Cormack[24] and Elizabeth Jeffreys,[25] so incomplete. The colloquium realised that a study of the works attributed to Alexios himself is also overdue: we circulated texts and draft translations of some of the works in *Alexios I Komnenos,* II and gave pride of place to the *Mousai;* the meeting was divided on the question of authorship, but the discussion has found its way into many of the papers in this volume.

The question of the visual arts was left in the capable hands of Lyn Rodley, who had originally said she would keep a watching brief for art, then lucidly opened a discussion at the colloquium and has now contributed a full paper to this volume.[26] But it was clear even before she turned her attention to the problem that the status of art is rather different from that of literature.

It is a truisim that an emperor whom art historians regard as a great patron of the arts is seen by economic historians as a spendthrift. Alan Harvey was given a clear field to put Lemerle

[22] See below, Beaton, 329-338; Galatariotou, 303-328.

[23] R. Browning, 'Enlightenment and repression in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *P&P,* 69 (1975), 5.

[24] R. Cormack, *The Byzantine eye. Studies in art and patronage* (London 1989), esp. IX and X.

[25] See most recently M. and E. Jeffreys, 'Who was Eirene the Sebastokratorissa?' *B,* 64 (1994), 40-68.

[26] See below, Rodley, 339-358.

and Svoronos and Hendy in their place,[27] for nowhere are views on Alexios more polarised than on the question of the economy. Was his overhaul of the financial system an economic miracle? Was his the catastrophic devaluation of the eleventh century? Were his concessions to Venice the first nail in the coffin of the Byzantine empire? Or simply a device to expand the empire's markets? What was the point of the *Nea Logarike* and did life get worse or better for the paroikos during the reign? Above all, is it realistic to expect that the emperor who had to confiscate church property should have enough cashflow to have an economic policy at all, let alone to put money into the patronage of the arts?

But what Menander thinks of as the core of any *basilikos logos* is the section on *praxeis,* deeds. We looked, according to his prescription, at both war and peace, and at the imperial virtues of courage, justice, temperance and wisdom. Alexios at war is an interesting topic. So often seen as the crude military man without a taste for the finer things of life it is interesting to consider how effective he actually was as a soldier. Clearly John the Oxite was not impressed.[28] Ahrweiler was delighted by Alexios's respect for the navy, so much so that she may have overestimated his success as a soldier. Certainly her picture of the Alexian reconquest has found short shrift in more recent historians like Lilie and Angold. It is possible to see his castle-building activities in the Balkans as essential elements of his policy there, just as Ahrweiler analysed his Anatolian castle-building as part of the four-point plan of reconquest: 1. military assault, 2. castle building, 3. replacement of the bishop, 4. urban regeneration.[29] Work on the ground in Macedonia is needed to build on the excavations of the Greek archaeological service at Moglena;[30] in Turkey work by Foss and Whittow prom-

[27] See below, Harvey, 168-184.

[28] John the Oxite, *Logos,* ed. P. Gautier, 'Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite contre Alexis Ier', *REB,* 28 (1970), 5-55 at 27.1-5.

[29] H. Ahrweiler, 'Les forteresses construites en Asie Mineure face à l'invasion seldjoucide', *XI IntCong* (Munich, 1960), 182-189, repr. *Études sur les structures administratives et sociales de Byzance* (London, 1971), XVII.

[30] The advantage of this area as seen by both Rowena Loverance and myself is its size, clearly differentiated building programmes in the sources and the complex settlement pattern. We hope to follow this up.

ises as much. So what remains of the reconquest? What Mark Whittow makes clear in this volume is that it was absolutely necessary for Alexios (as distinct from the Byzantine population of Anatolia) to mount a new campaign in 1092. And what is clear from Jonathan Shepard's paper, newly written for the volume,[31] is that his diplomacy was that of a soldier.

If we move on to peace, we turn to *dikaiosyne* with both administration and legislation being considered. Mildness, humanity and accessibility are recommended: how did Alexios measure up? Anna's alarming list of plots against his person is balanced by his generous treatment of the offenders, only the Bogomil trial really meriting the sternness which he could muster. But it is clear that some of these plots were nothing of the kind, simply trumped-up excuses to contain possible competition. And how accessible was Alexios? How did his subjects see him? How public was his rule? What difference did architecture make? Administration is clearly to be considered under this head. Anna Komnene gives the impression that the creation of court titles is all that matters here, but many have seen Alexios as the arch-reformer. Patricia Karlin-Hayter and Paul Magdalino addressed this question from different angles and with somewhat different conclusions.[32] Menander's handling of legislation has severe standards: 'therefore laws are more legal, contracts between men are more just'. To assess Alexios's record on this score we were delighted to welcome Ludwig Burgmann and Joseph Sonderkamp from the Max Planck Institute in Frankfurt. We hoped for years of fruitful cooperation with both of them; alas, Joseph died suddenly only eighteen months after the colloquium. The volume is dedicated to his memory; we hope that Ludwig will continue to collaborate with us for Joseph's sake as well as for our many common concerns.

Sophrosyne offers us an opportunity to observe the emperor's life-style, the new piety of a man accustomed from boyhood to take a holy man on campaign with him. Praise of the empress 'if she is of great worth and honour' follows—but which empress? Barbara Hill's paper examines the balance of power among the

[31] See below, Shepard, 68-132.

[32] See below, Karlin-Hayter, 133-145; Magdalino, 146-166.

several powerful women of the time; the sources make clear that all good emperors in the 1080s had mothers—and Alexios had two. Anna Dalassene's court may have been more like a monastery than a palace, but as far as Alexios is concerned Zonaras[33] could have given the lie to Menander's suggested praise: 'for the rest of womanhood he does not so much know they exist.'

In the early stages of planning the colloquium it looked[34] as if everyone would want to address the question of *sophrosyne* under the heading of Alexios the Thirteenth Apostle, represented not only in Anna but also in the Vatican Zigabenos. Alexios and the church is an area which badly needs reassessment. The work of Elefteria Papayanni has led the way, and Michael Angold's new book[35] gives the issues full treatment. But the questions are clear: how far is the energetic, theologically interested Alexios of the *Alexiad* a creation of its author? Did he put his money where his *logos* was? Or was the *logos* perhaps not his either, just as Christodoulos was, like Pantepoptes, Anna Dalassene's responsibility, Strumitsa bishop Manuel's, and Philanthropos the counterpart to Eirene Doukaina's Kecharitomene? Whether Alexios wrote the speech against the Armenians is a question we shall leave to the second volume, but if he was not interested in theology, why were there so many heresy trials in his reign? I used to believe that he was interested, though not for theological reasons, but Damian Leeson persuaded me that Alexios's actions were far less a matter of policy than of reacting to events, though the initiators of the events still remain dim. In this volume Dion Smythe[36] makes the straightforward case for heresy as a convenient device for social control, though his deliberate reliance on Anna's witness allows

[33] John Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν*, XVIII.24.14, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst (CSHB, Bonn, 1897), II, 747.

[34] Cf the Belfast theses, D.F.J. Leeson, *Imperial orthodoxy: heresy and politics during the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118)* (MA, 1987); P. Armstrong, *The lives of Meletios of Myoupolis. Introduction, translation and commentary* (MA, 1988) and E.M. Collins, *Prayer and mystical theology in eleventh-century Byzantium* (PhD, 1991).

[35] M.J. Angold, *Church and society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081-1261* (Cambridge, 1995).

[36] See below, Smythe, 232-259.

us to ask again whether Anna is not the creator of Alexios the heresy-hunter.

But there are other ecclesiastical issues: the tricky issue of monastic reform, which was tackled at the colloquium by Rosemary Morris[37] and will in future be a concern of the Evergetis project. Why is it that the Alexian holy men (Meletios, Christodoulos, Cyril Phileotes[38]) seem to be the last of their kind in relation to the state? Was there a monastic reform movement[39] and was Alexios part of it? Were John the Oxite and Leo of Chalcedon also? Is there a non-monastic counterpart and is this how we should see Alexios's reform of the clergy?[40] Here Pamela Armstrong looks at Alexios's patronage of holy men.[41]

And so to *phronesis*, which Menander sees as the facilitating virtue. 'You should say that the emperor would not have been capable of carrying out all these deeds, not would he have borne the weight of such weighty matters, if he had not surpassed all men on earth in wisdom and understanding, which enables lawgiving and temperance and all other virtues to come to successful fruition.' Was Alexios, like Menander's ideal emperor, 'quick to see, clever in understanding, better than a prophet at foreseeing the future, the best judge of the good counsel of others, and well able to tell the difficult from the easy'? Alexios is more often seen as the foxy diplomatist par excellence, the epitome of all that journalists like to describe as Byzantine. Jonathan Shepard's recent analysis[42] has shown him as outsmarted by the hunk Bohemond, and Shepard looks even more carefully at the issue here.[43]

And so it should be possible to arrive at some assessment of Alexios's achievement. Should we lay it at the door of fortune? Or

[37] See R. Morris, *Monks and laymen in Byzantium, 843-1118* (Cambridge, 1995), ch. 10, esp. 270-273.

[38] See below, Armstrong, 219-220 for others.

[39] J.P. Thomas, 'A Byzantine ecclesiastical reform movement', *Med et Hum*, n.s. 12 (1984), 1-16.

[40] See below, Magdalino, 199-218.

[41] See below, Armstrong, 219-231.

[42] J. Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek: Alexius Comnenus and Bohemund in 1097-98', *BMGS*, 12 (1988), 185-277.

[43] See below, 122-132.

is *phronesis* the true explanation? Alexios's long life must have contributed to the apparent solidity of his rule, but so also must the achievements of his son and grandson; some *synkrisis* with John and Manuel, as well as his eleventh-century predecessors and western enemies, is desirable. Few would now see with Ostrogorsky John as the greatest of the Komnenoi, but do Alexios's attempts pale by comparison with Manuel's achievements? The praise—and blame—of Alexios I are left to a later chapter[44] (for our 1989 encomium was indeed foreshadowed in 1088). What may be learned from the rhetoric of his deathbed I leave to the second volume, but the task of this volume is the unfashionable one of assessing the achievements of a single emperor against every possible yardstick, medieval and modern, and then deciding where this successor of Constantine should be placed: did he initiate or react? Was he a reformer or a reactionary? conservative or dangerous radical? brilliant general or incompetent soldier? pious Christian or cynical exploiter of orthodoxy? patron or philistine? author and hero of the Komnenian reconquest? or simply the primary engineer (and failed exploiter) of the Crusades? The papers which follow do not follow an agreed line or indeed answer all or any of these questions, but they seek to call back an enigmatic emperor from the oblivion of nearly a century.

[44] See below, 359-397.

2

Alexios Komnenos and Kastamon: castles and settlement in middle Byzantine Paphlagonia

James Crow

Anna Komnene describes her father's journey to Constantinople, returning from the daring capture of the renegade Norman Roussel, at Amaseia in 1075. The route passed directly to his 'grandfather's city' where Alexios and his followers briefly rested.[1] Here he was able to demonstrate to his Paphlagonian kinsman, Theodore Dokeianos, those virtues of guile and mercy proper to a future emperor by showing that the blinding of Roussel was only play-acting to ensure the safe conduct of the Norman back to Constantinople. To Anna's audience the city of Alexios's grandfather was familiar enough not to require naming.

The other contemporary account of these events by Nikephoros Bryennios, and possibly Anna's source, presents Alexios's journey somewhat differently.[2] Alexios first went to the home of Dokeianos, probably located in the valley of the Devrez Çay. It was here that he disclosed his ruse concerning Roussel.[3] After three days

[1] Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, I.iii.3-4, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols (Paris, 1937-45), I, 15-16, tr. E.R.A. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1969), 36-37.

[2] Nikephoros Bryennios, *Ὕλη ἱστορίας*, II, 25-27, ed. tr. P. Gautier, *Nicephori Bryennii historiarum libri quattuor* (CFHB, 9, Brussels, 1975), 194-201; H Grégoire, 'Nicéphore Bryennios, Les quatres livres des histoires', *B*, 22 (1953), 469-530, esp. 527.

[3] The home of the Dokeianoi in Paphlagonia was located by Sir William Ramsay at Dokeia, modern Tosya, *The historical geography of Asia Minor* (London, 1890), 321. This identification has misled and confused later commentators; thus S. Vryonis, *The decline of medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the process of*

Alexios set off northwards from the main route,[4] across the Ilğaz Dağları, towards the Black Sea. He took with him a small band of men in order to visit his grandfather's home at Kastamon. There he found the castle empty and desolate, and was only just saved by his companions when he was ambushed by Turkmens. Komnene interests had turned from their provincial homeland and its old estates towards Constantinople and imperial concerns, so that unlike the lands of the Dokeianoi, which were apparently still secure, the valley of the Amnias and the Komnene lands were prey to Turkmens. Alexios then travelled west through the narrow wooded valleys of western Paphlagonia to Herakleia Pontika (Ereğli) and from there to Constantinople by sea. The name

Islamization from the eleventh through the fifteenth century (Los Angeles, 1971), places Dokeia in Paphlagonia on his map, but in his text refers to it being in the Armeniakon theme (following Theophanes Continuatus, CSHB (Bonn, 1838), 426, the birthplace of John Kourkouas), where it can be identified with the later Turkish town of Tokat. The old name of Tosya is not known apart from a similarity with Dūsinīya, which appears in an Arab itinerary from Neocaesarea to Nicomedia; see E. Honigmann, 'Un itinéraire arabe à travers le Pont', *Annuaire de l'institut de philologie et histoire orientales et slaves*, 4 (1936), 268. The Dokeianoi originated from Dokeia, but that is not the same as their unnamed Paphlagonian estates.

[4] For routes in the Pontos see A. Bryer and D. Winfield, The Byzantine monuments and topography of the Pontos (DOS, 20, Washington, DC, 1985), chs. 1 and 2, esp. 19-22, and also A. Bryer, 'David Komnenos and Saint Eleutherios', *Archeion Pontou*, 42 (1988-1989), 161-188. The main route in Ottoman times, orta kol, ran along the valley of the Devrez Çay and passed through Gerede, Tosya and Osmancık en route for Amasya and the east, see Encyclopedia of Islam, 2nd edition, I, sv Anadolu, 474-475 and map. An improved version of this road serves as the main bus route from Istanbul to Samsun and Trabzon. How early there was a shift from the Roman road in the valleys to the north to this more southerly route is not known. Certainly Alexios seems to be going out of his way and into danger when visiting Kastamon. A number of Arab geographers describe this southern road; see Honigmann, 'Un itinéraire arabe', 268; it was followed for part of its length by the Crusade of 1101 in its vain attempt to rescue Bohemond from Neocaesarea (Niksar) before defeat at Merzifon, see below. A recent discussion makes them follow an unnecessarily complex route given their objective throughout Paphlagonia; see M. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine monetary economy c. 300-1450* (Cambridge, 1985), 40, map 11.

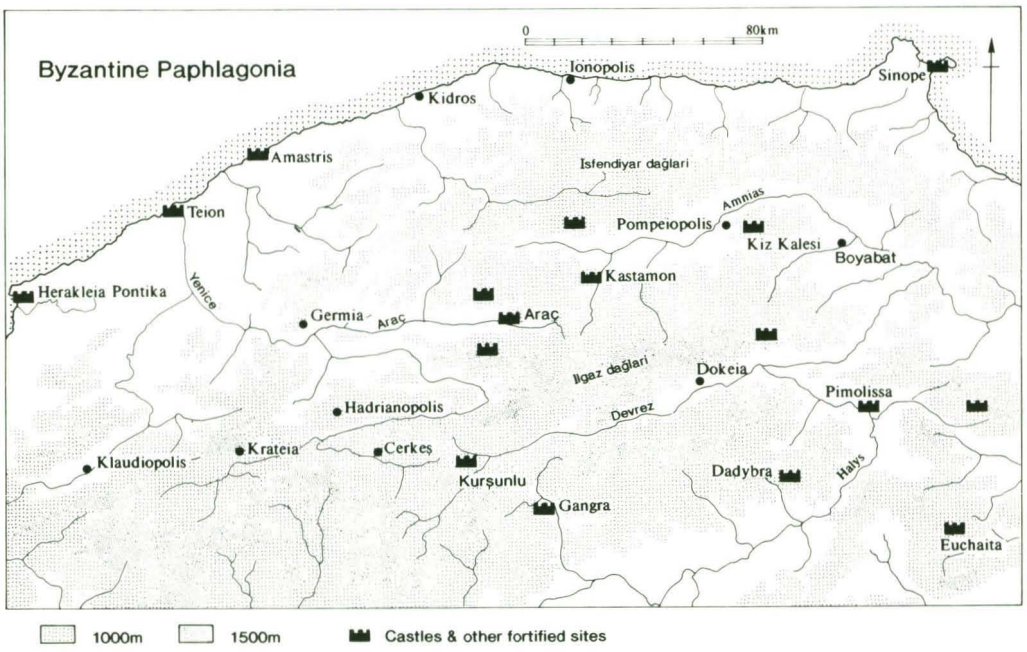

Fig. 1: map of Byzantine Paphlagonia

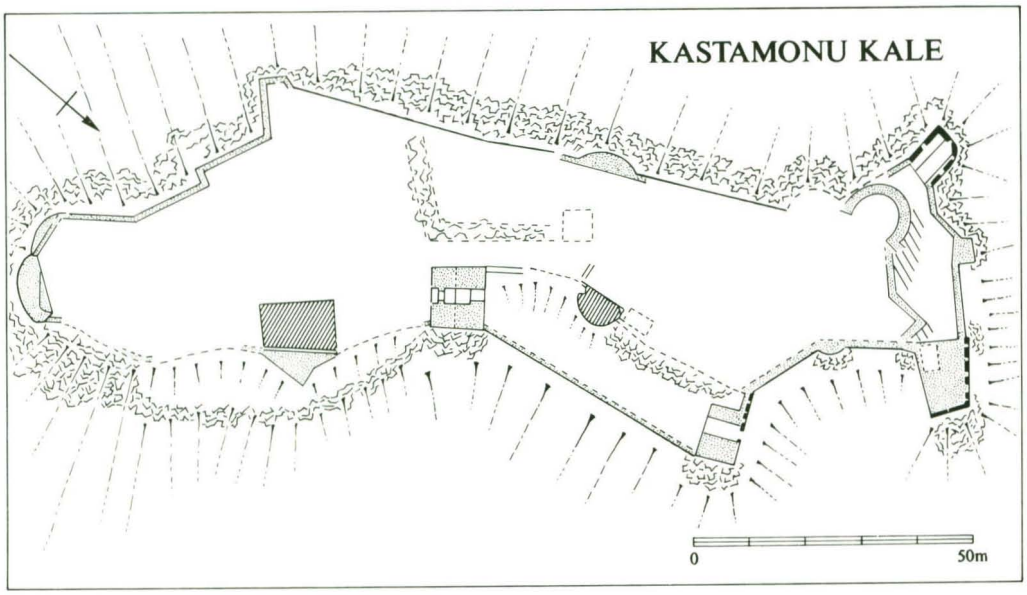

Fig. 2: ground plan of Kastamon

Komnenos was said to derive from the village of Komne near Adrianople in Thrace.[5] But the estates and power-base of the family are recorded from Byzantine sources in Anatolia and especially Paphlagonia, where the Komnenoi were intermarried with other powerful families, including the Dokeianoi and Doukai. It was at Kastamon that Isaac I Komnenos was proclaimed emperor in 1057 and before setting off he secured his wife and family in the nearby castle (*phrourion*) of Pimolissa (modern Osmancık) in eastern Paphlagonia,[6] possibly another Komnene castle or that of an allied family. Kastamon is here described as the house (*oikos*) of Isaac Komnenos. These events are the earliest direct association of the family with Kastamon, although the references to Manuel Erotikos, Alexios's grandfather, could push this at least a decade or two earlier. The only earlier evidence for the toponym comes from the family name of the Kastamonites who founded the monastery of Kastamonitou on Athos probably in 1037,[7] but like the Komnenoi the family is not attested before the eleventh century, and it is not known who founded the castle at Kastamon. The extent of Komnenian land holdings is otherwise unattested. Some of the smaller castles such as Araç and Assar Kalesi to the south of it were probably dependent upon Kastamon if they were contemporary with the Byzantine occupation. With the exception of Kastamonu none of the structures nor the landscapes of inland Paphlagonia have been archaeologically surveyed.

The castle at Kastamon had probably fallen under control of the Danishmendids before 1101, when Albert of Aachen records the massacre of foragers from the ill-fated Crusade of Merzifon by Turkmens near "*civitas Constamnes*".[8] Elsewhere in Paphlagonia a Christian population survived in places. The Crusaders passed through Christian villages, probably along the valley of the Devrez Çay to Pimolissa (Osmancık), where the orthodox priests and

[5] *ODB*, II, sv Komnenos, 1143; the derivation of Kastamon from the contraction of 'Castra Comneni', is a modern misconception, attributable to Ainsworth; see n. 15.

[6] Kedrenos, ed. I. Bekker, 2 vols (CSHB, Bonn, 1838-39), II, 622, 626.

[7] See *ODB*, sv Kastamonites.

[8] Albert of Aix, Liber Christianae expeditionis pro eriptione, emundatione et restitutione Sanctae Hierosolymitanae Ecclesiae, XII, RHO, IV, 566-567.

population came out to greet them but were butchered by the Crusaders.[9] John II Komnenos was able briefly to capture and hold Kastamon between 1131 and 1135 using siege engines, an achievement celebrated in Constantinople by a imperial triumph, but after this date the castle and the ancestral lands of the Komnenoi were lost forever to Byzantine control.[10]

But John II was not to be the last Byzantine emperor to campaign in Paphlagonia. In 1391 Manuel II Palaiologos, now an Ottoman vassal, accompanied Bayezit against the İsfenderoğlu who ruled Kastamonu and Sinope. In a letter to Kydones, Manuel presents a view of Paphlagonia nearly two centuries after the Komnenoi.[11] The world he describes is more distant from his own times. Devoid of population, the anonymous ruins of the valley of the Amnias become to Manuel merely a classical landscape to lament over. He appears ignorant or is intentionally silent about Kastamonu's association with a Byzantine past. Clearly the image he wishes to evoke is one of cities, lying 'in ruins, a pitiable spectacle for the descendants of those who once possessed them. They have not even names, the destruction being already old. And when I asked what were their names, those around me replied: "We have destroyed them, and time has destroyed their names"'.

After these laments the only place he describes is Pompeiopolis once 'a great, beautiful and marvellous city'. Manuel notes the stone bridge across the river from which the modern Turkish name of Taşköprü derives. Beyond this he only recalls a city of Zeno, otherwise unknown, to the south of Sinope.[12] If Manuel Palaiologos gloomily chose to ignore Kastamon and dwell on

[9] Al., XI.viii, L, III, 36-39, S, 355-357.

[10] F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène. Études sur l'empire byzantin aux XIe et XIIe siècles*, II (Paris, 1912), 82-91; E. Kurtz, 'Unedierte Texte aus der Zeit des Kaisers Johannes Komnenos', *BZ*, 16, (1907), 80-119.

[11] P. Charanis, 'Strife among Palaeologi and Ottoman Turks, 1370-1402', *B*, 16 (1942-3), 286-314, esp. 310-311; J.W. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391-1425). A study in late Byzantine statesmanship* (New Brunswick, 1969); letter 16 is now translated in G.T. Dennis, *The letters of Manuel II Palaeologus* (CFHB, 8, Washington, DC, 1977), 42-51.

[12] Charanis, 'Strife', 310; Dennis, *Letters*, 48. A Leontopolis is known between Sinope and the Halys, Bryer and Winfield, *Byzantine Pontos*, 89.

classical glories, the later medieval sources clearly distinguish the town as a major urban centre. An Ottoman source calls it 'the lofty citadel of the Turkmens', and a number of late medieval monuments including a wooden mosque signify its importance.[13]

Kastamon and Kastamonu Kalesi

The modern town of Kastamonu lies on a southerly tributary of the Gökırmak, with good communications leading west across a low pass to the valley of the Araç Çay and northwards to Küre, a copper mining centre, and the coast at Inebolu (classical Ionopolis). The principal remains of the preclassical period are a complex rock cut tomb, Evkaya.[14] Few of the classical Greek and Latin inscriptions in the provincial museum at Kastamonu are attributed to the town or its immediate environs. The main focus for classical settlement was Pompeiopolis (Taşköprü), 44 km to the east.[15]

The castle provides the only surviving archaeological evidence for Byzantine settlement at Kastamonu. It is located in the south-west quarter of the town on a steep sided rocky spur 112m high. It is connected to the higher ground at its north-west end by a low col and only here and along part of the north side is the castle accessible. On the remaining sides the ground falls in steep cliffs to the valley floor. Near the summit are traces of rock-cuttings and a man-made tunnel both of which could date before the Byzantine period.[16]

[13] *Encyclopedia of Islam, sv* Kastamuni, 1st ed., II 806-807, 2nd ed., III 737-739.

[14] H. von Gall, *Die paphlagonischen Felsgräber* (Istanbuler Mitteilungen, Beiheft, I,1966), 65-73.

[15] See now C. Marek, *Stadt, Ära und Territorium in Pontus-Bithynia und Nord-Galatia* (Istanbuler Forschungen, 39, 1993).

[16] The fullest account of Kastamonu Kalesi in earlier travellers is W.F. Ainsworth, *Travels and researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Chaldia and Armenia*, 2 vols (London, 1842), 79-84. Ainsworth was among the first to attribute wrongly the derivation of Kastamon to 'Castra Comneni'. The only published plan is by M. Akök, 'Kastamonu Sehiri Tarihih Içkalesi', *Belleten*, 9 (1945), 401-404; this plan is reproduced with a historical discussion in N. Sevgen, *Anadolu Kaleleri*, I (Ankara, 1959), 197-307, volume II of which seems never to have appeared. For a discussion of the tunnel see G. Jacopi, *Dalla Paflagonia alla Commagene. Relazione sulla prima campagna esplorativa (Settembre 1935 XIII- novembre 1935 XIV)* (Rome), 4-8.

The defended area is small: the maximum length is 155m and it varies between 30 to 50m in width. The approach is on the north-east side. An outer gateway leads to a ramp parallel with the curtain wall, beyond which is an inner gateway leading on to the summit of the rock. The main defences are concentrated at the vulnerable north end. Here there are three large, projecting rectangular towers, constructed with large blockwork masonry. Within this line, and at a higher level, is an inner defence of two towers, one semi-circular, the other triangular in plan (part of this may be a nineteenth-century artillery platform). The remainder of the circuit is defended by irregular towers conforming to the line of the rocky perimeter. The only surviving structure on the summit apart from the tunnel is a cistern south of the inner gate.

The walls reveal a complex structural sequence as might be expected from the known history of the Byzantine and Turkish castle. The earliest phase of large blockwork can reasonably be assumed to be Byzantine in date. This is seen at the north end, as already noted, and in the footings of the outer gate. While the use of building style to date fortifications in the Byzantine period remains very imprecise,[17] a possible analogy with this use of large blockwork can be seen in the Byzantine refortification of Amastris, a major Paphlagonian naval fortress perhaps eighth-century in date.[18] At Kastamon such an early date is unlikely, but at the same time blockwork remains a characteristic feature of early Byzantine construction (seventh-ninth centuries). In Paphlagonia and elsewhere in the central Pontos it features only in major fortresses.[19] Some of the texts referring to Kastamon describe it as a city, others merely call it à castle or house of the Komnenoi. Today the rock and castle dominate the town and the remains of any earlier settlement around its flanks are lost. A good surviving example of

[17] See now the attempt by Foss in C. Foss and D. Winfield, *Byzantine fortifications, an introduction* (Pretoria, 1986).

[18] J. Crow and S. Hill, 'A Byzantine and Genoese fortress on the Black Sea', *Fortress*, 5 (1990), 3-13.

[19] See Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine fortifications*, Amaseia, 227, fig. 56.

this type of settlement is Kalecik (classical Malos) on the banks of the Halys[20] to the north of Ankara.

In order to understand more about Kastamon and the Komnenoi it is necessary first to examine the regional context from the Roman to the middle Byzantine periods, and second to compare Kastamonu kalesi with other archaeological monuments in medieval Paphlagonia and the central Pontos. The valley of the Gökırmak (Gökova), the classical Amnias, is amongst the most fertile in Paphlagonia.[21] This is reflected in the concentration of preclassical rock-cut tombs which can serve as crude indicators of economic and social status.[22] The main political centre in Paphlagonia before the Romans was at Gangra (Çankari) on the southern limit of the region,[23] which retained the status of a metropolis until the eleventh century.[24] Pompeiopolis was a new foundation at the east end of the valley of the Amnias (Gökova). As the name suggests it was part of a series of new cities created in the Pontos by Pompey in 65/4 BC.[25] The classical city can be located at Zımballı Tepe close to Taşköprü.[26] It is a large, low mound next to the river, which like many Anatolian cities probably originated as an important prehistoric settlement before Pompey's foundation. Architectural fragments and inscriptions indicate its significance in the Roman period. It was first mentioned as a bishopric at the council of Nicaea in 325. It was later raised to the status of archbishopric, and in the reign of Basil II, along with Amastris, the see

[20] S. Mitchell, *Anatolia: Land, men and gods in Asia Minor*, I (Oxford, 1993), 147; Ainsworth, *Travels and researches*, 74.

[21] Ainsworth, *Travels and researches*, 74-75.

[22] Von Gall, *Paphlagonische Felsgräber*, pl. 1.

[23] For Galatia and the Roman conquest of this region see Mitchell, *Anatolia*, I, chapters 1 and 2.

[24] E. Honigmannn, 'The original lists of the council of Nicaea, the robber synod and the list of Chalcedon', *B*, 16 (1942/3), 51, no. 39; V. Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux de l'empire Byzantin*, V, i-ii, *L'église* (Paris, 1963), no. 1594.

[25] Mitchell, *Anatolia*, I, 31-34.

[26] Marek, *Pontus-Bithynia und Nord-Galatia*, 68; for a recent excavation see Z. Yaman, 'Kastamonn ili Taşköprii İlçesi Pompeiopolis (Zımballı Tepesi Höyöğü) 1984 Yılı Kurtarma Kazısı, Müze Kurtarma Kazıları Semineri, 1 (1990), 63-109.

became an autocephalous metropolitan.[27] The name disappears from the *Notitiae* in the thirteenth century. The only material evidence for occupation in the later Roman period is five Christian tombstones known from Pompeiopolis.[28]

Pompey's new cities were constructed along a major east-west road, the eastern extension of the Via Egnatia from Chalcedon. Milestones and traces of this road survive in the Amnias valley and to the east.[29] Nothing is known of Pompeiopolis, apart from references in bishop lists, until Manuel II's lament on past glories. Whether the name survived so long can be doubted. The epigraphic record is quite rich and several stones record the former name, a possible source for an inquisitive emperor.[30]

If the sources are silent about Pompeiopolis in the middle Byzantine period, the valley of the Amnias and therefore the city's hinterland figure in a famous saint's life of the ninth century. The *Life* of St Philaretos the Merciful of Amnia was written by the saint's grandson Niketas in 821-2, and the *Life* describes the marriage of the saint's daughter Maria with Constantine VI in 788.[31] Philaretos is portrayed as a wealthy landowner with estates in Galatia and Pontos. He lived at Amnia within the limits of Gangra, which still remained the metropolis at this time. The site of Amnia is not known, but it must have been located in the valley of the Amnias (Gökova) within the territory of Pompeiopolis, a region noted in the nineteenth century as the most fertile in Paphlagonia. One of the main sources of Philaretos's wealth however were flocks of sheep and goats, which needed to be grazed in the moun-

[27] H. Gelzer, *Georgii Cyprii descriptio orbis romani* (Leipzig, 1890), 45; Laurent, *Sceaux*, no. 780.

[28] Marek, *Pontus-Bithynia und Nord-Galatia*, 154-155.

[29] For this road see Mitchell, *Anatolia*, I, 127; Regular reports on Roman roads and milestones of Asia Minor by D. French appear in *Anatolian Studies* in 'The year's work' arranged according to vilayet; for Paphlagonia see *AnatSt*, 35 (1985), 9, road from Boyabat to Taşköprü; *AnatSt*, 37 (1987), 10-11, road east of Taşköprü; *AnatSt*, 38 (1988), 9-10, roads from Gangra towards Kastamonu across the Ilğaz mountains, and west near Kurşunlu and near Çerkeş.

[30] See Marek, *Pontus-Bithynia und Nord-Galatia, 136*, no 3; 137, no 4.

[31] *BHG*, 1511 Z; ed. tr. M.-H. Fourmy and M. Leroy, *B*, 9 (1934), 113-167; see now M. Kaplan, *Les hommes et la terre à Byzance du VIe au XIe siècle: propriété et exploitation de sol* (ByzSorb, 10, Paris, 1992).

tains beyond the Amnias valley, a further indication of the extent of his estates. Despite the variety of his holdings which the *Life* portrays it is still significant that Pompeiopolis does not figure at any point in the *Life*.

The evidence considered so far suggests the following sequence of the changing pattern of settlement in the Gökova/Amnias valley:

1 Pre-classical (first millennium BC) Rock-cut tombs, mound at Zimbilli tepe, hillfort at Assar kalesi

2 Major foundation of a new city of Pompeiopolis

3 Bishopric of Pompeiopolis continues into early Byzantine period

4 Important rural settlement at Amnia. Bishopric continues, but the absence of the city in accounts of Arab raids, saints' *Lives* and other sources indicates that it no longer acted as the focus of regional administration (eighth-tenth centuries)

5 Regional centre at Kastamon; the castle is the centre for aristocratic estates and power (tenth-eleventh centuries). The bishopric of Pompeiopolis continues and is given autocephalous status reflecting developments in the Amnias valley as much at the former city

6 Loss of region to the Turks. New urban regional centre at Kastamonu replaces Pompeiopolis, which is abandoned (twelfth-fourteenth centuries)

Pompeiopolis-Kız Kalesi: From *polis* to *kastron*?

It is apparent from this outline that there is no direct link between the changes in status and function of Pompeiopolis and the appearance of Kastamon as the base for one of the *dynatoi* or powerful landed families in the tenth century onwards. This shift from an urban to a rural powerbase is already suggested for the eighth century in the *Life* of St Philaretos.

The decline or transformation of classical urbanism remains central to any study of the provincial history and archaeology of the Byzantine world.[32] The emergence of the castle, the transfer from *polis* to *kastron*, has been identified as one of the fundamental changes in the early medieval landscape of Byzantium. The evidence which has been examined so far from Paphlagonia suggests that the process was not as clear cut as some sources and discussions choose to admit. Critical to any understanding of this process in the valley of the Amnias must be the major classical city of the region, Pompeiopolis. Very little is known about the material culture of the city, apart from the inscriptions and few architectural fragments collected in Marek's recent study.[33] Otherwise we are left with Manuel Palaiologos's lamentations on classical antiquity. The silence of all Byzantine sources concerning the city apart from bishop lists and seals, in contrast to Gangra and relatively insignificant places such as Dadybra, at the very least poses the question of what happened to Pompeiopolis between the seventh and tenth centuries.

On an isolated hill overlooking the valley of the Gökırmak is the castle of Kız Kalesi. This flat topped hill can be clearly seen from Taşköprü at a distance of 7.5 km north-east of the town.[34] The site overlooks the main Roman road which leaves the northern sweep of the valley of the Gökırmak beyond Pompeiopolis to rejoin it at Boyabat to the east.[35] The hilltop is roughly oval in shape, no more than 80m long by 25m wide. It is fortified with a single circuit wall showing two main phases of construction. The first is of alternating rubblework and brick bonding courses with footings of reused classical spolia. In the second phase coarse rubblework is used to repair walls and for additional towers. All the towers are rectangular in shape. The use of brick and reused spolia suggests that Kız Kalesi was more than just a local refuge. Its location close to a major Roman road implies that it was constructed not only to sat-

[32] See now the important discussion by A. Cameron, *The Mediterranean world in late antiquity* AD *395-600* (London, 1993).

[33] Marek, *Pontus-Bithynia und Nord-Galatia*, 65-71, 135-155, pl. 43.

[34] R. Leonhard, *Paphlagonia: Reisen und Forschungen in Nord-Kleinasien* (Berlin, 1915), 128, pl. 45.

[35] See French, 'The year's work', for the road from Taşköprü to Boyabat.

isfy local needs of security but formed part of a wider system of internal defence. Immediately below the site to the west are the traces of a settlement, but a detailed survey is required to be able to comment on its date and extent.

The construction techniques used at Kız Kalesi differ from those at Kastamonu, although how far this is of chronological significance remains to be explored. The presence of brick, perhaps reused, and spolia from a classical building may suggest that Pompeiopolis was in a state of decay. This should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with recent archaeological studies of the east Mediterranean city in the later sixth and seventh centuries, but the spoils of one temple hardly signal total systems collapse.

A feature of the early medieval landscape of Anatolia and the Balkans was the renewed prominence of fortified hilltop settlements.[36] These are often described as castles, although the term needs to be used with care, given its association in the west with the growth of feudalism. There may be castles in the western sense in Anatolia, but it should be remembered that in a centralised kingdom, like England by the thirteenth century, many castles were centres for royal administration and demonstrations of military power. When using the term in a Byzantine context we need to be aware of the potential variety of meanings which it can convey.

Not all castles in Byzantium have the same function or development. The earliest examples which are found in Asia Minor date from the seventh century.[37] The defences constructed at places such as Sardis, Ephesos (Ayasoluk) and Ankara are fortresses as distinct from mere urban defences, and although in all instances the chronology of these fortifications remains imprecise, they are clearly major works of imperial defence and not refuges for a shattered urban community. The traditional frontiers of the empire had been smashed when Syria and Palestine were lost to the Arabs and the army groups were withdrawn on to the Anatolian plateau. From this time new fortresses were needed at major administra-

[36] See J.G. Crow, 'The late Roman frontier on the lower Danube', ed. D. Breeze, *The frontiers of the Roman empire* (forthcoming).

[37] Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine fortifications.*

tive centres and initially at least it is possible to discern a distinction between the civil and military defences. Certainly this can explain the situation at Ephesos, where the fortress around the church of St John was a fortified centre, distinct from the early Byzantine walls around a part of the old classical city.[38] Yet not every major urban centre received such treatment, some cities such as Nicaea and possibly Caesarea (Kayseri) remained with their old circuits repaired, while the countryside saw the appearence of new forts or castles at strategic points such as Malagina in Bithynia.[39] In the troubled times of the late seventh and eighth centuries, as the supply of coins and other dateable artefacts to the provinces was disrupted, it becomes increasingly difficult for the archaeologist to provide even a general chronology for many sites.

The best example of one of these newly fortified imperial fortresses in Paphlagonia is the coastal city of Amastris.[40] Otherwise there are no examples of the so-called theme castles apart perhaps from Amaseia. Another type of fortified site, almost inevitably anonymous, are refuges, comparable in many ways to the *Fliehburgen* known from the late Roman Rhineland.[41] Foss has identified and planned one such site near Kütahya at Altıntaş[42] and a similar site is found in south-east Paphlagonia at Karacavıran, above the town of Kurşunlu and close to where the Roman road from Gangra turns west towards Cerkeş.[43] Other castles in Paphlagonia, such as Mollah Ahmet Kalesi in the hills north of Kastamonu or Araş Kalesi in the valley to the west of Kastamonu,[44] appear to be single

[38] W. Müller-Wiener, 'Von der Polis zum Kastron. Wandlungen der Stadt im ägaischen Raum', *Gymnasium*, 93 (1986), 435-475, fig. 7. Examples of fortresses, such as Ayasoluk, are found in the Balkans in the sixth century at Veliko Turnovo and Kjustendil, see Crow, 'Late Roman frontier'.

[39] For Nicaea see n. 34 above; for Malagina see C. Foss, 'Byzantine Malagina and the lower Sangarius', *AnatSt*, 40 (1990), 161-184.

[40] Crow and Hill, 'Byzantine and Genoese fortress'; S.J. Hill and J.G. Crow, 'Survey at Amasra', *Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantası*, 9 (1991), 83-92.

[41] S. Johnson, *Late Roman fortifications* (London, 1983), 226-244.

[42] C. Foss, *Survey of medieval castles in Anatolia, I, Kutahya* (British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, Monograph 7, 1985), 95-98.

[43] See French, 'The year's work'; Ainsworth, *Travels and researches*, II, 36-37.

[44] For the prehistoric and later monuments of Paphlagonia see A Gököglu, *Paphlagonia (Paflagonya)* (Kastamonu, 1952); see also Bryer and Winfield, *Byz-*

castles of a type described by Tabula Imperii Byzantini as 'Einzelfestung' and on their map key as 'Festung (zumeist mit zweitem Mauerring)'. This is in contrast with walled towns or those unwalled towns with an upper fortress ('mit Zitadelle oder Oberburg').[45] It might be possible to identify Kız Kalesi with this type, but the problem with these definitions is that they do not take into account the changing significance of one element compared with another through time. Perhaps more significant is that the castle lay close to an important Roman road and so formed part of a system of internal control at the time of Arab raids, rather than just an urban refuge.

Euchaita, an exceptional city?

No documented or excavated examples of these transitions in urban layout are known from Paphlagonia, but the city of Euchaita in neighbouring Helenopontos provides a possible model for the changes that could be expected elsewhere. Euchaita has become the focus for a stimulating debate about the changing morphology and function of the Byzantine city. Trombley has argued that the topographical evidence from the *Miracles of St Theodore* 'attest in sum to a town of considerable size'. In opposition Kazhdan has presented a series of corrections and argues that Euchaita was 'a small *polisma*', not a flourishing city which became merely 'a

antine Pontos, 73, n. 39, map 1; note that Masraoğlu Kale south of Kız Kalesi is not a castle, but the robbed-out stone remains of a large structure, possibly a church.

K. Belke, *Tabula Imperii Byzantini*, 4, *Galatien und Lykaonien* (Vienna, 1984), 113.

F.R. Trombley, 'The decline of the seventh-century town: the exception of Euchaita', *Byzantine studies in honor of Milton V. Anastos, Byzantina kai Metabyzantina*, 4 (1985), 65-90; A Kazhdan, 'The flourishing city of Euchaita?', *XIV BSC* (Houston, 1988), 4; C. Zuckerman, 'The reign of Constantine V in the *Miracles of St Theodore the Recruit* (BHG 1764)', *REB*, 46 (1988), 191-210; see also the comments of J. Haldon, *Byzantium in the seventh century, The transformation of a culture* (Cambridge, 1990), 109-110, n. 40. To these studies may be added F. Cumont and E. Cumont, *Studia Pontica* (Brussels, 1903), II and III, 202-207, inscriptions at 213-215; H. Delehaye, 'Euchaita et la légende de S. Theodore', *Anatolian studies presented to Sir William Mitchell Ramsay*, ed. W.H. Buckler and W.M. Calder (Manchester, 1923), 129-134.

stronghold surviving hostile attacks'. Indeed he believes that the *Miracles of St Theodore* do not refer to Euchaita at all but to Amaseia. As with so much of the anecdotal evidence from Byzantine texts, the source material for Euchaita lends itself to manipulation and interpretation according to the theoretical stance of the observer and discussant. Trombley attempts to develop the thesis that any discussion of the survival of towns into the Byzantine Dark Age 'must be decided from specific case studies'. On the other hand Kazhdan, followed by Haldon, interprets the evidence to illustrate the general thesis of urban decline as advanced by himself, Mango and others.[47] The conventional wisdom has become the disappearance of cities and discontinuity with the classical world. Indeed Haldon asserts that Euchaita in the eighth century on the basis of these texts was 'not a city but a ranch or an estate'. Clearly such a divergence in interpretation merits further investigation.

Miracle 7 of St Theodore describes how the Arab raiders used Euchaita as a base and winter quarters while the town's population took refuge in the *ochyromata* or fortifications above. Cattle were brought into the town from the neighbourhood[48] and many died (presumably because of disease and starvation caused by a lack of winter fodder). The stench of the swollen corpses forced the Arabs to withdraw, but only by the intervention of the saint was the pollution washed away, by a local downpour of rain, and the city once again became habitable. The narrator of the *Miracle* was concerned primarily with the act of purification by the saint and the protection and support this gave to the city. Whatever practical effect this might have had was secondary to the spiritual cleansing of the city after the withdrawal of the Muslim Arabs. To argue as Haldon does that the city had become little more than a ranch is a wilful misrepresentation of the evidence, even if it does support

[47] Haldon, *Byzantium in the seventh century*; it is significant that the recent major study of Byzantine agriculture by Kaplan, *Les hommes et la terre*, makes no reference to the *Miracles of St Theodore* as a source for stock-raising or any other agricultural activity.

[48] For the importance of livestock to the Pontic economy see the *Life of St Philaretos* and the discussions by Kaplan, *Les hommes et la terre*.

his general hypothesis concerning the increase of stock breeding in central Anatolia as a consequence of the regular Arab razzias.[49]

Zuckerman's article, published in the same year as the abstract of Kazhdan's lecture, provides a much firmer basis for the study of the *Miracles* and their application to the questions of early Byzantine urbanism. His conclusion about the city is that 'in the period discussed, the city, however badly damaged, was neither reduced to nor transferred to the protected *kastron*'.[50]

Any study of Euchaita needs to recognize that it was not a typical early Byzantine city. Firstly, it is an example of a new city created as the pilgrimage centre of St Theodore the Recruit which had developed from the late fourth century.[51] The religious centre benefited from major imperial and episcopal patronage, which was recognized by the creation of an independent bishopric in the fifth or early sixth century. Secondly, this patronage resulted in the construction of major fortifications by Anastasios attested by an inscription.[52] The construction of these fortifications at Euchaita has been associated with a raid of the Huns throughout Cappadocia in the early sixth century, but the specific defence of Euchaita is more likely to be connected with the new status of a late antique *polis* as represented in its public works, particularly its churches and fortifications. A comparable Anastasian foundation of a pilgrimage centre is the shrine of St Sergios at Resafa/Anastasiopolis in Syria.[53] It is significant that Resafa was also a major fair and

[49] J.F. Haldon and H. Kennedy, 'The Arab-Byzantine frontier in the eighth and ninth centuries: military and society in the borderlands', *ZbRad*, 19 (1980), 79-116, esp. 99-101.

[50] Zuckerman, 'The reign of Constantine V in the *Miracles of St Theodore*', 199.

[51] S. Mitchell, *Anatolia*, II, *The rise of the church* (Oxford, 1993), 69.

[52] C. Mango and I. Ševčenko, 'Three inscriptions of the reign of Anastasius I and Constantine V', *BZ*, 65 (1972), 379-84. These inscriptions, formerly in the school yard at Mecitözü, are now in Amasya Museum.

[53] For the fortifications see W. Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer von Resafa in Syrien* (Berlin, 1976). The chronology of some of the major monuments at Resafa/Sergiopolis remains controversial; despite a widely accepted Justinianic date there are clearly a number of phases of construction and the architectural decoration of the defences has closer parallels with late fifth century work than of the sixth century. See M.M. Mango, 'The continuity of the classical tradition in the art and architecture of northern Mesopotamia', *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the formative period*, ed. N. Garsoian, T. Mathews and R. Thompson (Washington, 1982), 115-134, esp. 121-122.

market, a function Euchaita retained until the Seljuk invasions.[54] The text of the inscription has been discussed already, but its size is itself worthy of note. It is 2.15m long by 0.72m high and was originally positioned on a major structure. Little survives of fifth- or sixth-century fortifications in central or eastern Anatolia. One possible contemporary structure is the fortified circuit at Viranşehir-Kaleköy in eastern Cappadocia.[55] The scale of these defences may serve as a parallel for the Anastasian work at Euchaita which as Mango and Ševčenko demonstrate was very extensively robbed of its building stone for construction at Amaseia from the later medieval period onwards.[56] Another pointer to the material wealth of the city is the single surviving capital of Proconnesian marble which in 1972 stood beside the Anastasian building inscription in the school yard at Mecitözü. It was also of a late fifth/sixth century date and belonged to either a major urban or religious monument such as a tetrapylon or the martyrion of St Theodore, both of which are mentioned in the *Miracles* and other sources.

The importance of Euchaita is reflected not just in the *Miracles* and its surviving Anastasian antiquities but also in an account in the history of Michael the Syrian. It describes the earliest Arab raid into Asia Minor by Mu'awiya in 640/1 (unattested elsewhere) which gives Euchaita the unenviable reputation of being the first

[54] For Resafa see Cameron, *Mediterranean world*, 181-182; for Euchaita, S. Vryonis, 'The *Panegyris* of the Byzantine saint: a study in the nature of a medieval institution, its origins and fate', *The Byzantine saint*, ed. S. Hackel, 196-227, 202; it should be noted that John Mauropous's comments on the desert-like environment of Euchaita are not to be interpreted literally (as does Hendy, *Monetary economy*, 140-142) but in contrast to the wealth and vitality of the fair: see *The letters of Ioannes Mauropous metropolitan of Euchaita*, ed. A. Karpozilos (CFHB, 34, Thessalonike, 1990), 25-26. On the problem of the literal interpretation of the literary evidence see M.E. Mullett, 'Originality in the Byzantine letter: the case of exile', *Originality in Byzantine literature, art and music*, ed. A.R. Littlewood (Oxford, 1995), 39-58.

[55] M. Restle, 'Viranşehir-Kaleköy, ein befestigter Platz in Kappadokien', *JÖB*, 24 (1975), 196-20.

[56] Mango and Ševčenko, 'Three inscriptions', 384.

city on the Anatolian plateau to be captured by the Arabs.[57] This event is somewhat surprising since the city is too distant from the frontier zone in Cilicia to have been the object of a random attack. Whether the Arab armies were intent on 'strategic as well as predatory aims' is unstated,[58] but in either case, Euchaita would appear to have been a specific objective and therefore a prize. A fact which singles it out and must influence our understanding of the later city. The first Arab attack is not recorded in the *Miracles of St Theodore* which do however make an allusion to a raid by the Huns in *Miracle* 4 (515?) and describe attacks by the Sasanians in *Miracles* 2 and 3 (621?).[59] The major event was, however, an Arab attack and capture of the city presented in *Miracles* 4, 6 and 7, which Zuckerman has shown can be dated to 753/4 during the reign of Constantine V. *Miracles* 9 and 10 apparently refer to a lesser raid in the later 750s.

As the recent commentaries by Trombley and Zuckerman both observe, these accounts of the tribulations of Euchaita provide valuable evidence about the topography of the urban settlement. Three main elements emerge: a walled town (*polis* or *astu*), the pilgrimage centre outside the walled area, and an upper refuge referred to in the *Miracles* as *ochyromata* or fortifications. Trombley suggests that the absence of this word in the description of the Sasanian attack is significant in showing that the fortress at Euchaita, as elsewhere, was a late seventh-century development. It is doubtful whether such a text can be subjected to so precise an interpretation and Zuckerman avoids this inference. The *Miracles* do suggest however that there were two distinct upper and lower areas to the town, and importantly they show that the late eighth-century *polis* of Euchaita was not simply a shrunken fortified hilltop. The ninth *Miracle* (c. 750s) describes how at the time of a raid the population of the town took refuge in the *ochyromata* while the city was left deserted but for a single priest at the shrine of the

[57] Quoted in Trombley, 'Euchaita', 78; see also W. Brandes, *Die Städte Kleinasiens im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert* (Amsterdam, 1989), 53.

[58] W. Kaegi, *Byzantium and the early Islamic conquests* (Cambridge, 1992), 246.

[59] C. Foss, 'The Persians in Asia Minor and the end of antiquity', *EHR*, 90 (1975), 731, n. 4, notes a hoard of gold solidi datable to c. 613 from Mecitözü near Euchaita.

saint. The Arab army is described as camped outside the town. They discover and capture the priest and force him to lead them within the town walls in a search for hidden treasure. The priest makes his escape at the tetrapylon with divine assistance and the Arabs depart empty handed. It is assumed throughout that the citizens are secure in the fortifications above. Although they are not defended, it is significant that the town is described as still having walls, presumably the defences constructed by Anastasios, with later repairs. Unlike the TIB model of an undefended lower town with an upper citadel, the *encomia* of St Theodore at Euchaita clearly describe the continuity of settlement within a setting defined by the late antique city walls, where some of the major features of the classical townscape (tetrapylon) still survived.

The evidence from Euchaita hardly supports the view of an overall decline in urban life from the seventh century onwards. But it could be argued that since Euchaita was one of the major pilgrimage centres of northern Anatolia, where in the mid-eleventh century John Mauropous was archbishop, it does not constitute a **typical** early Byzantine city. Consequently the evidence from the *Miracles* need not support the thesis for widespread Byzantine urban continuity in Anatolia, but in itself it does challenge the conventional wisdom of general urban decline.[60]

Throughout antiquity the relative fortunes of cities waxed and waned; external patronage, normally regal or imperial, was always important and in the later Roman period became crucial for a city's long-term survival and significance. Recent excavations at Amorium in Phrygia have revealed an unexpected major fortification of the classical city in the fifth century AD, probably in the reign of the emperor Zeno or Anastasios.[61] The causes of this mas-

[60] Haldon, *Byzantium in the seventh century*, with extensive bibliography, see also A. Harvey, *Economic expansion in the Byzantine empire 900-1200* (Cambridge, 1989). However recent surveys do not always confirm this pattern: see the work at Kyaneai in Lycia in F. Kolb and B. Kupke, *Lykien, Geschichte Lykiens im Altertum* (Mainz, 1992), 74-75.

[61] TIB, IV 123; R.M. Harrison, 'Amorium excavations 1990', *AnatSt*, 41 (1991), 215-229, esp. 220-222, fig. 4; the triangular gate tower closely matches that from the east gate at Thessalonike dated to the mid-fifth century, J.-M. Spie-

sive investment in civic prestige are as yet unclear, but it provided Amorium with fortifications comparable in scale and complexity with the lower Danube or Euphrates frontier of the empire, and defensively far superior to those of the great cities of the west coast of Asia Minor.[62] To judge from the inscription of Anastasios surviving from Euchaita we can expect these fortifications were comparable in scale. It is clear therefore that some cities, for a variety of reasons, were better equipped and situated to cope with and survive the trials of the seventh and eighth centuries.

A tenth-century Persian geographical account of the regions of the world, Hadud al'-Alam, which was dedicated to a ruler in northern Afghanistan, describes the land of the Rum in the following way: 'Most of the districts are prosperous and pleasant, and have (each) an extremely strong fortress, on account of the raids which the fighters of the faith direct upon them'. It is easy to contrast this with the Chinese view of the Roman empire, a view also deriving from the Iranian plateau, describing it as a land of 400 cities.[63] The contrasts are extreme and so far as the former is concerned certainly exaggerated. Not all cities were reduced to a citadel with a cluster of undefended hovels below. It is easy to compare Byzantine urbanism from the eighth to the tenth century unfavourably with its eastern neighbours in the Islamic world, but compared with western Europe it was a model of urban life even if it was no longer as extensive or diverse as the eastern Roman cities of the age of the Antonines.[64] It is unclear to me why Byzantine economic historians choose to diminish the evidence for continued 'Dark Age' economic activity at places such as Ephesos where the eighth- to ninth-century community still occupies an area greatly

ser, *Théssalonique et ses monuments du IVe au VIe siècle* (Athens, 1984), 66-68, 74-76, fig. 2.

[62] For the lower Danube see Crow, 'Late Roman frontier'; for Asia Minor see Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine fortifications*.

[63] V. Minorsky, *Hadud al'Alam, The regions of the world* (London, 1937), 157; see the discussion in Haldon and Kennedy, 'The Arab-Byzantine frontier', 96-97; for the Chinese account see D.L. Kennedy, *The Roman frontier in north east Jordan* (BAR, Int.ser., 134, Oxford, 1982), 137-138.

[64] See the evidence for Ephesos presented by Müller-Wiener, 'Von der Polis zum Kastron', figs. 6 and 7.

in excess of the contemporary trading centres of north-western Europe.[65]

Kastamon and Paphlagonia

How is it possible to relate these views to the castles and cities of Paphlagonia and the Komnenoi? Ahrweiler in her discussion of the effects of the Arab raids on Anatolia has argued that one result of these raids was to enhance the importance of fortified towns such as Gangra, which acted as refuge points for the surrounding population. She further suggests that the raids also fostered the growth of towns which were away from the plateau and therefore sheltered; the examples she cites are Amastris and Kastamon.[66] Similar conditions to those described at Euchaita occur at Amastris in the *Life* of St George, the local bishop who organised the safety of the local population within the walls of the fortress during an Arab raid. Ahrweiler's inclusion of Kastamon assumes that it was an urban settlement of some form as early as the ninth century, which remains doubtful.

It should be clear from this discussion that although there were significant transformations in the institutional and social conditions of the Anatolian provinces,[67] the effect of these changes on the cities was not felt uniformly. One model which may assist in understanding the success and failure of cities at the end of antiquity has recently been suggested by Greene in his discussion of the survival of technology in early medieval Europe.[68] He adapts a recent evolutionary model from the natural sciences: 'In essence favourable environmental conditions without competition allowed an enormous increase in the diversity of organisms, but when circumstances changed drastically, survival resulted from chance

[65] Harvey, *Economic expansion*, 26-27; R. Hodges, *Dark age economics: the origins of towns and trade AD 600-1000* (London, 1989).

[66] H. Ahrweiler, 'L'Asie Mineure et les invasions arabes (VIIe-IXe siècles)', *Revue Historique*, 227 i (1962), 1-32, esp. 28-29.

[67] Haldon, *Byzantium in the seventh century*, 105; see now Cameron, *Mediterranean world*, chs. 7 and 8.

[68] K. Greene, 'Technology and innovation in context: the Roman background to medieval and later developments', *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 7 (1994), 22-33.

features which happened to suit a new environment, rather than straightforward survival of the fittest'.[69] When this is applied to the settlement hierarchies of Anatolia in the seventh and eighth centuries, it is possible to recognize that certain cities, such as Euchaita and Amorium, came better equipped with the cultural and physical resources to weather the 'catastrophe' of the Arab raids. Other formerly significant cities such as Pompeiopolis only survived as nominal centres of ecclesiastical administration. A city like Pompeiopolis eventually became the skeleton of a classical city as described by Manuel Palaiologos, which like a modern tourist site retained no more than the physical presence of its ruins.

A broad overview of the settlement history of the mountains and valleys of central Paphlagonia reveals that before Roman domination the native elite occupied castles described by Strabo as *phrouria,*[70] an example of which may be the pre-Roman hill fort of Assar Kalesi to the north of Araç. The shrines of the Paphlagonians were scattered in the high places of the Olgassys (Ilğaz Dağları). Pompeiopolis was created as a new urban focus, one of a number of civic foundations astride a major artery in the new Roman road network throughout Asia Minor and a crucial element in the Romanisation of the region. By the eighth century, if not earlier, the dominance of a single city in the settlement hierarchy of its territory and in particular the Amnias valley had broken down. Pompeiopolis was not a special city; it lacked the **contingency**[71] to survive and flourish in the more hostile environment of the early middle ages. A combination of archaeology and hagiography, not always reliable bedfellows, indicates that at least two alternative foci had emerged: firstly Philaretos's village and estate-centre of Amnia and secondly the castle of Kız Kalesi lying at a strategic point on the communications system at the eastern extremity of the valley. How far it is possible to equate this *kastron* with the bishopric of Pompeiopolis, remains elusive. Kız Kalesi

[69] Greene, 'Technology and innovation', 28, summarising the position of S.J. Gould, *Wonderful life: the Burgess shales and the nature of history* (London, 1989).
[70] Mitchell, *Anatolia*, I, 84.
[71] Greene, 'Technology and innovation', 28.

may have served as the *ochyromata* for the former city. But the interior parts of Paphlagonia never suffered the full effect of the Arab raids and it is more likely that there was a residual ecclesiastical presence at old Pompeiopolis attested in the bishop lists while the castle fulfilled a military role. By the eleventh century the focus had shifted to the western end of the valley at Kastamon, once again at a strategic point close to the watershed between the Araç and the Gökırmak, but also with useful communications to the south and north. This was a fitting residence for a leading family in the rural military aristocracy of eleventh-century Byzantium, even if the Komnenoi were not the founders of a castle at Kastamon. The interlude of classical urbanism was finally over, and Paphlagonia returned to a pattern of dynastic strongholds similar to that prevailing before Pompey's defeat of Mithradates in the first century BC. It was for the local Turkish rulers to encourage and benefit from the later medieval town life of Kastamonu.

Many of the details in this outline remain fuzzy but more important than the general pattern which emerges is the identification and examination of those critical periods of transition. An obvious one is at the end of antiquity, but what about the change from the eighth/ninth centuries to the tenth century? It is not simply the transition from *polis* to *kastron* but from *polis* to *oikos* and *proasteia,* with *ochyromata* which could be either one of the theme castles or alternatively a refuge. Later the pattern changes to the dominance of the aristocratic *kastron* such as that of the Komnenoi at Kastamon. Such a castle could also be termed an *oikos,* but it is not certain to me that all *oikoi* are castles, or vice-versa. The association of the Komnenoi with Kastamon makes it one of the few surviving examples of a *kastron* of the *dynatoi* in Anatolia. Other examples of dynastic castles have been suggested in Cappadocia, at Çavuşin for the Phokades,[72] and at Atra for the Gabrades.[73]

[72] E. Patlagean, A *history of private life,* I, *From pagan Rome to Byzantium,* ed. P. Veyne (Cambridge and London, 1987), 570-571. For a discussion of the aristocratic *oikos* see also P. Magdalino, 'The Byzantine oikos', *The Byzantine aristocracy, IX to XIII centuries,* ed. M. Angold (BAR Int.ser., 221, Oxford, 1984), 92-111.

When a new crisis came, following Manzikert, the interests of the Komnenoi had turned from the provinces to the centre and imperial power. Alexios passed by to give homage to his forebears, but in the event he was lucky to escape with his life and was powerless to intervene. The valley of the Amnias, once the setting of one of the great Roman roads of Anatolia, had fallen prey to marauding Turkmens. The valley lacked the local leadership which the Dokeianoi provided to the south and Kastamon was lost; ultimately it was people not castles that mattered in the defence of Byzantine Anatolia.[74]

[73] A. Bryer, 'A Byzantine family: the Gabrades c. 979 - c. 1653', *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, 12 (1971), 175, n. 44, see also n. 22; the castle is a small, but impregnable building to the south of the village.

[74] Acknowledgements: I first went to Kastamonu and Tasköprü in 1972 with five Paphlagonian travellers, Anthony Bryer, Maurice Byrne, Michael Trend, Sally Harvey and Margaret Mullett. I can only thank them for their good company and good ideas. In 1986 I returned with the encouragement and financial assistance of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara. Part of the time I travelled with Stephen Hill and among the places we visited was Amasra, but that is another story. I am also grateful to Stephen for presenting, in my absence, a version of this paper at the Alexios symposium, which encouraged me to prepare this text for publication. Klaus Belke and Anthony Bryer have commented extensively on earlier drafts of this paper and I am indebted to them for corrections and comments. Any mistakes and perversities remain my own. I would like to thank Sandra Rowntree for redrawing the map and plan which originally appeared in my undergraduate dissertation. Lastly I must thank all the Turkish Paphlagonians for their hospitality and kindness over the years.

3

Alexios I Komnenos and the imperial women

Barbara Hill

In her paper for *New Constantines*, 'Alexios Komnenos and imperial renewal', Margaret Mullett raised the question of legitimisation after the reign of Alexios Komnenos, and presented two types of legitimisation, one male and one female. The female method, gaining the support of the empress, was the dynamic of Alexios's own success, and continued into the 1080s, but it failed at the end of his reign. Anna Komnene attempted to succeed to the throne with her mother's backing, but was outmanoeuvred by her brother John. Anna's claim to her father's throne is the reason behind the set-piece book XV of the *Alexiad*. The method of legitimisation which was successful in 1118 harked back to the Macedonian dynasty: it is reminiscent of Basil to Leo, clearly directed from father to son. The text which propounds this is the *Mousai of Alexios Komnenos*. Mullett views this work as the alternative to the scenario put forward in the *Alexiad*.[1]

The very suggestion that there was a change in the power of women is in contradiction to the implicit belief that most scholars hold, following the opinion of Lemerle, that Alexios was 'faible devant les femmes', especially his mother, Anna Dalassene, and his wife, Eirene Doukaina.[2] Yet if the activities of

[1] M.E. Mullett, 'Alexios Komnenos and imperial renewal', *New Constantines: the rhythm of imperial renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th centuries*, ed. P. Magdalino (SPBS, 2, Aldershot, 1994), 257-267.

[2] P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 298. Magdalino attributes Alexios's policy on kin to the influence of his womenfolk,

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Alexios I Komnenos and the imperial women

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In her paper for *New Constantines*, 'Alexios Komnenos and imperial renewal', Margaret Mullett raised the question of legitimisation after the reign of Alexios Komnenos, and presented two types of legitimisation, one male and one female. The female method, gaining the support of the empress, was the dynamic of Alexios's own success, and continued into the 1080s, but it failed at the end of his reign. Anna Komnene attempted to succeed to the throne with her mother's backing, but was outmanoeuvred by her brother John. Anna's claim to her father's throne is the reason behind the set-piece book XV of the *Alexiad*. The method of legitimisation which was successful in 1118 harked back to the Macedonian dynasty: it is reminiscent of Basil to Leo, clearly directed from father to son. The text which propounds this is the *Mousai of Alexios Komnenos*. Mullett views this work as the alternative to the scenario put forward in the *Alexiad*.[1]

The very suggestion that there was a change in the power of women is in contradiction to the implicit belief that most scholars hold, following the opinion of Lemerle, that Alexios was 'faible devant les femmes', especially his mother, Anna Dalassene, and his wife, Eirene Doukaina.[2] Yet if the activities of

[1] M.E. Mullett, 'Alexios Komnenos and imperial renewal', *New Constantines: the rhythm of imperial renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th centuries*, ed. P. Magdalino (SPBS, 2, Aldershot, 1994), 257-267.

[2] P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 298. Magdalino attributes Alexios's policy on kin to the influence of his womenfolk,

imperial women are examined over the period when the Komnenian system was still working, it becomes clear that they decline in number and importance. One possible way of explaining this development is to relate it to the implementation and consolidation of the Komnenian system first set up by Alexios Komnenos. Although it developed further under John and Manuel and produced other consequences than the decline of women's power, Alexios must bear the responsibility for initiating it in the first place. This is not to accuse Alexios of misogyny, but to assert that, far from being weak before women, he succeeded in re-establishing the male authority which had been under attack for the bulk of the eleventh century: the victory of the male method of legitimisation at the end of his reign is one more demonstration of the measure of his success.

Before considering the effects of the implementation of the system on the activities of imperial women, it is worthwhile examining the two liminal situations of 1080 and 1118 because they point very clearly to the contrast between the beginning of Alexios's reign and the end. The differing strategies to which the two women concerned resorted demonstrate that the power and prestige of the emperor had undergone a startling change. In 1080 Maria of Alania was faced with a situation of crisis. The emperor, Nikephoros Botaneiates, was in the process of grooming one of his relatives to succeed him, while Maria intended her purple-born son to become the next emperor. Maria threw her support to the Komnenos family, adopting Alexios as her son and looking out for his interests at court after obtaining oaths from Alexios and Isaac that her son would not lose his throne through them.[3] In other words, she created an alternative power base to that of the emperor, which succeeded because her legitimating capacity was high and the absolute authority

'Innovations in government', above. M. Angold, *The Byzantine empire 1025-1204, a political history* (London, 1984), 92, 105, 118, recognizes the vital importance of Anna Dalassene's network for Alexios's continued success despite military disasters during the first ten years of his reign.

[3] Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, II.ii.1-3, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols (Paris, 1937-45), I, 66-68, tr. E.R.A. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1969), 75-77.

of the emperor was low. Maria had ensured a peaceful result to the usurpation of Nikephoros three years previously by marrying him. When he attempted to exclude her son from the succession, Maria removed her support and bestowed it elsewhere. Her justification for such disloyalty to her husband was her concern for her son. Motherhood, as Mullett has remarked before, was the great ideological winner of the 1080s.[4] Alexios came to power on the back of the empress's favour and the activity of his biological mother, Anna Dalassene, who had set up such an alliance of families that no one could stand against the Komnenoi. Both Maria and Anna were praised by Theophylact in the 1080s for their maternity in speeches which are in fact double *basilikoi logoi*.[5]

But at the other end of Alexios's reign, the mother figure of Eirene Doukaina employed a totally different strategy to try to ensure the succession of her daughter and son-in-law. Unlike Maria of Alania, who had not wasted her breath arguing with Nikephoros but had calmly circumvented him, Eirene made Alexios's decision the target of her attack, arguing with him incessantly, slandering John as rash and presenting Bryennios as a more suitable candidate for the imperial throne.[6] As Mullett has pointed out, Anna Komnene does not repeat the account of her mother's nagging which is preserved by both Zonaras and Choniates. It has no place in the picture of loyalty and legitimacy that she is trying to build up.[7] Eirene's other strategies included broadcasting her bad opinion of John and turning the

[4] M.E. Mullett, 'The disgrace of the ex-basilissa Maria', *BS*, 45 (1984), 202-211. See also 'Imperial renewal'.

[5] On Constantine and Maria see Theophylact of Ochrid, or. 4, *Λόγος εἰς τὸν πορφυρογέννητον κῦρ Κωνσταντῖνον*, ed. P. Gautier, *Théophylacte d' Achrida. Discours, traités, poésies* (CFHB, 16/1, Thessalonike, 1980), 177-211; on Alexios and Anna, or. 5, *Λόγος εἰς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα κῦριν Ἀλέξιον τὸν Κομνηνόν*, ibid, 214-243.

[6] John Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν*, XVIII. 28.19-20, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst, 3 vols (CSHB, Bonn, 1897), III, 761-762. Niketas Choniates, *Χρονικὴ διήγησις*, ed. J.-A. van Dieten, *Nicetas Choniatae historia* (CFHB, 11/1, Brussels, 1975), 5.

[7] Mullett, 'Imperial renewal', 265.

administration over to Bryennios when Alexios empowered her to manage affairs,[8] but it was John who canvassed the nobles who had sworn loyalty to him as a child to build up an alternative base of support.[9] Eirene's conviction that the way to victory lay through Alexios's decision demonstrates the strength of the rejuvenated authority of the emperor which was one of the achievements of Alexios Komnenos.

The question then concerns Alexios's method. How was the authority of the emperor restored? The answer is not new. Alexios elevated the whole imperial family above the rest of society to heights to which the only access was by birth or marriage. His 'statecraft' has been discussed by Byzantinists in many different contexts since Stiernon demonstrated that the determining factor for rank was degree of relationship to the emperor.[10] The significance of the titles in terms of power at court and a real share in the government is well known.[11] However, the effect of the new titles on the women of the family has not been addressed and therefore the gap in privilege between the men and the women goes unnoticed. As part of the imperial family, Komnenian women shared in its prestige, but inside it women as women were subordinated. Alexios's new titles were invented for the benefit of his male kin, either by blood or marriage. His primary male kin, brothers and sons, were eligible for the title of *sebastokrator*, which was analogous to *basileus*.[12] The highest title granted to brothers-in-law and sons-in-law was *caesar*: they never became *sebastokratores*. The ladder of promotion was different for blood kin and affinal kin. The most common title was that of *pansebastos sebastos*, which was awarded to

[8] Zonaras, XVIII. 26.14-15, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 754.

[9] Zonaras, XVIII. 24.20, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 748.

[10] L. Stiernon, 'Notes de prosopographie et de titulature byzantines, 1-5', *REB*, 17 (1950), 90-126; *REB*, 19 (1961), 273-283; *REB*, 21 (1963), 179-198; *REB*, 22 (1964), 184-198; *REB*, 23 (1965), 222-243; *REB*, 24 (1966), 89-96.

[11] N. Oikonomides, 'L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au XIe siècle (1025-1118)', *TM*, 6 (1976), 125-152. Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 106. Most recently P. Magdalino, *The empire of Manuel Komnenos* (Cambridge, 1993), 180-182.

[12] *Al.*, V.ii.4, L, II, 11, S, 158.

nephews by blood of either a brother or a sister, or a nephew-in-law, but all the higher titles were granted according to which sort of blood tie was present. Titles were granted to men who married Alexios's daughters (or nieces) as a dowry,[13] one which fixed their place in the court hierarchy and guaranteed them a voice in the counsels of the emperor.[14] Their wives, the purple-born daughters, carried the female form of these titles, but did not receive any authority by virtue of their titles alone. The result of the system is clear. To be related to the emperor was good, but it was better to be related on the male side. It entailed higher ranking from birth, since brothers and sons were *sebastokratores*, while daughters were a degree lower, *kaisarissai* or *panhypersebastoi*. Sons were given titles on their own account, but daughters received titles on marriage, so that their husbands would be elevated in the hierarchy. These daughters held a lower rank than the women their brothers married, and were not eligible for promotion. The emperor built around himself a nucleus of male relatives to whom he turned for advice and who were sent to take up governorships of cities and commands in the army. Alexios therefore centered himself in a male

[13] There is no evidence to specify exactly what the many daughters of the Komnenian emperors received as dowry, but the grant of a title and its income on marriage suggests strongly that titles were the coin in which the emperor paid his obligations. A title was the dowry awarded to foreign rulers who married Komnenian women, and it is reasonable to assume that internal marriage worked the same way. See R. Macrides, 'Dynastic marriage and political diplomacy', *Byzantine diplomacy*, ed. J. Shepard and S. Franklin (SPBS, 1, Aldershot, 1992), 263-280.

[14] See the synod lists for 1094, ed. P. Gautier, 'Le synode des Blachernes (fin 1094). Étude prosopographique', *REB*, 29 (1971), 213-284; 1147, ed. G.A. Ralles and A. Potles, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων*, 6 vols (Athens, 1852-9, repr. 1966), iv, 307-308; 1157, ed. Sakkelion, *Πατμιακὴ βιβλιοθήκη* (Athens, 1890), 316-317; 1166, Ἔκθεσις τῶν πραχθέντων ἐπὶ τῇ ζητήσει τῆς ἐξηγήσεως τοῦ ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ Εὐαγγελίῳ ῥητοῦ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, τοῦ Ὁ Πατήρ μου μείζων μού ἐστι', ed. S.N. Sakkos, Ὁ Πατήρ μου μείζων μού ἐστι· ἔριδες καὶ σύνοδοι κατὰ τὸν ιβ' αἰῶνα (Thessalonike, 1968), 141-142, 153-155; 1170, ed. S.N. Sakkos, Ἡ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Σύνοδος τοῦ 1170, *Χαριστήριον εἰς τὸν καθηγητὴν Παναγιώτην Κ. Χρήστου, Σπουδαστήριον τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς γραμματολογίας*, VI (Thessalonike, 1967), 332-333, 341-342.

world, where loyalty was rewarded with high rank and power, and the vulnerability of the emperor as the sole target for malcontents was lessened. The full implications of this policy had become clear by the time Manuel Komnenos was on the throne: he had to take steps to reverse his grandfather's achievement and raise the prestige of the individual emperor above that of the mass of male relatives, all of whom believed that they had a claim to imperial power.[15] Women had no legal or structural place in this scheme. There were no positions for women to fill which brought them automatic recognised authority.

The steps which Manuel Komnenos took illustrate two of the areas in which imperial women's activities lessened over the period of the Komnenian system in action. Manuel took all marriage alliances into his own hands and he prevented his relatives, both male and female, from founding monasteries. Women had been prominent in both these activities before the coup of 1081 and during the first ten years of Alexios's reign. Anna Dalassene married her family with speed and dexterity into every prominent household from the 1060s on and the formidable Eudokia Makrembolitissa used marriage alliance skillfully up until 1081. The link between these two women is never made explicit in the sources which describe their actions,[16] but it is clear that they were acting in concert to manipulate the emperor from the death of Constantine X Doukas in 1069. They both suffered exile after the failure of one of their schemes, but both continued to influence events even from that oft-tried place of exile, a monastery. Eudokia was able to communicate first with Romanos Diogenes and then with Nikephoros Botaneiates from her monastery, offering either her-

[15] P. Magdalino, 'The Byzantine holy man in the twelfth century', *The Byzantine saint*, ed. S. Hackel (Studies supplementary to *Sobornost*, 5, London, 1981), 51-66, repr. *Tradition and transformation in medieval Byzantium* (Aldershot, 1991),VII.

[16] Exile of Eudokia: Attaleiates, *Ἱστορία*, ed. I. Bekker, *Michaelis Attaliotae Historia* (CSHB, Bonn, 1853), 168; Zonaras, XVIII. 15.3, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 704; Nikephoros Bryennios, *Ὕλη ἱστορίας*, I. 20, ed. P. Gautier, *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (CFHB, 9, Brussels, 1975), 122-124. Exile of Anna: Bryennios, I. 22, ed. Gautier, 128.

self or her daughter to him in marriage.[17] The caesar John was so disturbed at the possibility of her return to power that he took action on two fronts, both advancing another candidate for empress and sending a servant to represent to Eudokia how shocking a third marriage would be. Anna Komnene finds it impossible to record on paper all that was said to Eudokia by Leo Kydoniates which persuaded her in the end to withdraw her offer.[18] Botaneiates, who appears to have been disappointed by the way things had turned out, ended her exile, restored all her property and showered her with honours, conduct much more in keeping with her dignity than the treatment meted out to her by her ungrateful son, as Attaleiates is quick to point out.[19] Even in 1081, Eudokia had bargaining power, for the Komnenoi were quick to honour her daughter with a marriage to Adrian Komnenos. This alliance may have been the price of Eudokia's support, or her solution for her daughter's future: in either case, she was considered dangerous enough to be placated by the triumphant dynasty, which at that point did not know how successful it was going to be. Alexios also took care to load her with all the honours befitting an empress as well as looking after her sons.[20] Anna Dalassene's exile was of short duration once the eunuch Nikephoritzes gained ascendancy over Michael VII, and her son Isaac was married to a relation of the empress, as part of a reconciliation package. The nature and the source of the connection between Nikephoritzes and Anna is nowhere elucidated, but it cannot be coincidence that the rise to prominence of the Komnenoi dates from the eunuch's position as Michael's closest advisor.[21] When Nikephoros Botaneiates interred Anna and her family in a monastery at the time of the flight of Alexios and Isaac, she managed to keep abreast of events. In this case the method is explained: Maria of Bulgaria bribed the guards with the best of the food provided for the

[17] *Al.*, II.ii.5, L, I, 108, S, 107-108.

[18] *Al.*, III.ii.5, L, I. 108, S, 108. Zonaras, XVIII. 19.11, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 722.

[19] Attaleiates, ed. Bekker, 304.

[20] *Al.*, IX.vi.3, L, II, 173, S, 281.

[21] Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 100.

women.[22] Another example of a woman who used marriage alliance as a method is Maria of Alania. After the abdication of Michael Doukas, Maria married Nikephoros Botaneiates. Her conduct is always assumed to have been influenced by the caesar John, but the sources merely record that he persuaded Botaneiates to marry Maria.[23] Maria may well have been the initiator of the idea. She certainly married Botaneiates gladly, despite his age and her own abandoned husband, for it was the best way to safeguard her son's inheritance. When Botaneiates groomed a relative of his own for the throne, she turned to the Komnenoi, perhaps contemplating a third marriage, for there was certainly gossip rampant in the city after the Komnenian coup that Alexios was going to divorce his wife and marry Maria.[24]

The use of marriage alliance as a method has been seen as gender-related,[25] but to reach such a conclusion is to fall into the trap of biological determinism. Not only women at this time were convinced of the potential of marriage as a method: the caesar John Doukas was also. A glance back in time reveals the root of the phenomenon. It is striking that there are greater numbers of visible women in the histories of the time; this reflects the heightened profile of 'aristocratic' women. Women, as well as men, understood how kinship worked, and can be seen operating networks to extend their repertoire of kin. This has been described as the 'aristocratic principle'.[26] The tenth-century families of Phokas and Skleros, categorised as aristocratic by modern historians, intermarried before Basil II executed and exiled their members. After his abortive attempt to reverse the trend the families continued to expand and to make peace by allying themselves with others. Bryennios records the means by which two warring families came to an agreement. On the suggestion of 'the mother of the Bryennioi', a marriage alliance was made which united the Bryennioi and the Tarchaniotai thereby

[22] *Al.*, II.v.9, L, I, 79, S, 86.
[23] *Al.*, III.ii.3, L, I, 107, S, 107.
[24] Zonaras, XVIII. 24.14, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 747.
[25] Magdalino, 'Innovations in government', above. He also recognizes the role of the caesar John as a marriage broker.
[26] Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 133.

stopping their enmity.[27] The manoeuvres of the Komnenoi therefore fit into a long tradition. Anna Dalassene was the direct inspiration for her son's policies, since she brought him up, but her own views came from her upbringing as a member of one of the great families of the eleventh century. The caesar John was a product of the same milieu, where the prevailing wisdom recommended creating kin as a method of survival. Botaneiates recognised the nature of the Komnenos family. When he arrested the womenfolk, he arrested them all, not only Anna Dalassene but her daughters and daughters-in-law. The *protovestiaria* Maria was also summoned and imprisoned with them: Botaneiates realised how far out the links of kin went.[28] He himself had tried to avoid kin ties in his own marriage so that he could operate alone. The caesar John was able to manipulate him into marrying his candidate, Maria of Alania, by reminding him that she had no kin to trouble him.[29] It is probable that Alexios, having seen the effects of his mother's strategy prior to his coup, would emulate it, as other offspring of the time were doing. Constantine Doukas, the youngest son of Constantine X and Eudokia Makrembolitissa, was equally determined to ally his family with the best, wanting Alexios for his sister, rather than his cousin.[30] An accident of death has given Anna Dalassene too much credit, concentrating attention on her sex rather than her society, adducing biological rather than social causes.

The undercurrents of power through the manipulation of networks that can be sensed prior to the Komnenian coup disappear thereafter. Eirene Doukaina was a patron of monasteries and people and a nurse and guardian to Alexios, but her influence in the marriage alliances made for the members of her family is implied only in the fact that so many foreign brides took her name on marriage. Anna Komnene does not hint that her mother was involved in making the marriage alliances

[27] Bryennios, III. 7, ed. Gautier, 225.
[28] *Al.*, II.v.8, L, I, 79, S, 85.
[29] *Al.*, III.ii.3, L, I, 107, S, 107.
[30] Bryennios, III, 6, ed. Gautier, 221-223.

which were part of the foundation of the Komnenian system, and Zonaras states that Alexios arranged the marriages not only of his own children but those of his brother's children too.[31] Eirene as a wife therefore had no visible role in the important power-building activity of marriage alliances. What she did do was to look out for the welfare of her children inside the marriages that their father arranged for them, in one case even breaking a marriage up because it was proving unsuitable.[32] But the crisis point of 1118 demonstrates her impotence as a mother, in comparison to the power of the women of 1081.

The same point is illustrated by the rest of Komnenian mothers, but may be partly due to historical accident. Two of those mothers, Eirene of Hungary and Bertha-Eirene, died before their husbands. Eirene of Hungary bore eight children and spent her time and money on others.[33] She was dead at the time of the succession crisis of 1143. Bertha-Eirene practised philanthropy and took care of her daughters' education, but she died too soon to have any influence in the marriage of the one who survived. Maria of Antioch is little heard of while Manuel was alive, but she came into her own after his death since she was regent for their underage son. These women hardly figure in the sources in contrast to Anna Dalassene and Eirene Doukaina, but this is not necessarily support for the argument about Alexios's weakness before the two who are more visible. An alternative theory is that only women with a kin group could operate at a power level when it was required.[34] John's Eirene was from Hungary, Manuel's Bertha-Eirene from Germany and his Maria from Antioch. Transportation into a foreign land

[31] Zonaras, XVIII. 22.27, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 739-740 for his own children, XVIII. 24.13-14, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 746-747 for Isaac's children.

[32] Zonaras, XVIII. 22.29, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 739.

[33] Kinnamos, *Ἐπιτομὴ τῶν κατορθωμάτων*, *I*, ed. A. Meineke (CSHB, Bonn, 1836), 9-10, tr. C. Brand, *The deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus* (New York, 1976), 17.

[34] See B. Hanawalt, 'Lady Honor Lisle's networks of influence', *Women and power in the middle ages*, ed. M. Erler and M. Kowalenski (Athens and London, 1988), 188-212, for the importance of a kin network in pursuing strategies.

must have robbed these women of both confidence and a close kin network. Eirene Doukaina had the powerful family of Doukas behind her, ready to see and complain about any insult. Their value had been proved at the very beginning of the reign when it was Eirene's family who ensured her coronation. Bertha-Eirene arrived in 1142 and was not married until 1146. No record survives of her feelings about and during this delay, but they must have been analogous to those of Katherine of Aragon after the death of Arthur and before her marriage to Henry: would she be sent home or would she live in penury in England?[35] Bertha's kin did eventually ensure her future for Manuel married her on hearing that Conrad was on his way to Byzantium, but the physical distance between her kin and herself meant that they could not protect her as the Doukas family did Eirene. A geographically close kin network provided more than protection: it conferred power. The Doukas family was more part of the core of the Komnenian network than of the periphery, and a Doukas woman had powerful relatives to influence. Unfortunately, there is not enough evidence to show how well Eirene used the network or to what ends, but the coincidence of less general visibility for women at the same time as they come from foreign lands suggests that the lack of relations was one factor which influenced it. Another argument for the importance of the kin network is the career of Manuel's sister-in-law, Eirene the *sebastokratorissa*, who was also almost certainly a foreigner. Although the details are obscure, she was certainly exiled twice for getting in Manuel's way:[36] would exile have been her fate if her kin were the Doukai?

The *sebastokratorissa* Eirene provides positive evidence of the change which was taking place between the days of Alexios and those of Manuel. She disapproved of her daughter, Theo-

[35] See Katherine of Aragon's letters to her father asking for money to pay her servants and to buy food. Original manuscript, BL Egerton MS 616.fol.27: 29-30; 32: 34-37, ed. G.M. Bergenroth, *Calendar of state papers, Spanish*, vols I-II (1868).

[36] Cf. F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II, *Jean II Comnène et Manuel I Comnène* (Paris, 1912), IIi, 212-213; E. and M. Jeffreys, 'Who was Eirene the sevastokratorissa?', *B*, 64 (1994), 40-68.

dora, being married to Henry of Austria and wrote to Manuel about it, fulfilling her motherly duty.[37] The result of her petition is instructive: she was ignored. By Manuel's time the emperor took a greater interest in marriage alliances than ever before, and either arranged them himself, particularly if they were with foreigners, or gave his permission if they were internal.[38] Manuel arranged more marriages with other powers than any emperor before him, and needed to use his nieces as brides. He did this in the teeth of parental opposition. The other end of the spectrum had been reached. In the crisis days of 1081 it was mothers who did the arranging, but by the reign of Manuel, all arranging was in the hands of the emperor, and where mothers complained they were ignored. The account of the power of women to arrange marriage alliances reveals a great change over the period in question, from mothers as marriage brokers to protesting mothers cast aside by an emperor who arranged all alliances himself. This is due to the consolidation of the system from a period of crisis in male authority, where women were to the fore, to a restoration of male authority, when women were pushed back into the background.

The changing role of imperial women as patrons also merits consideration. Anna Dalassene founded the monastery of Pantepoptes and Eirene Doukaina that of Kecharitomene. Eirene of Hungary co-founded Pantokrator with John Komnenos, but after that the patronage of monasteries by imperial women declines, mostly as a result of Manuel Komnenos's deliberate policy of preventing his relatives from exercising this type of patronage. Choniates records that Maria of Antioch wanted to transform the so-called 'house of Ioannitzes' into a monastery for women after the death of Manuel but that the task was carried out by Isaac Angelos.[39] Since re-foundation carried the same ideological load as foundation it is surprising that so few imperial women followed the trend set by the eleventh-century empresses in general of involving themselves in monasticism.

[37] Anonymous poet, ed. E. Miller, *RHC, Hist. Grecs*, II, 768.
[38] Magdalino, *Empire*, 205.
[39] Choniates, ed. van Dieten, 419.

Even non-empresses had restored monasteries in the eleventh century, like Maria of Bulgaria who refurbished the Chora. The reason for their abstinence may be economic. Evidence for money in the hands of imperial woman has to be inferred from conspicuous spending, since the sources do not specify what money they had and its source. Anna Dalassene had control of the *sekreton* of the Myrelaion, but given her position, her patronage took the form of government grants of land and exemptions from tax: there are documents detailing her generosity to the monks of the monastery of Docheiariou and to Christodoulos of Patmos.[40] Eirene Doukaina endowed Kecharitomene with property, but there is no hint of the source of the property, nor whether she had the use of the revenues of the monastery, which must have been large.[41] Eirene of Hungary endowed Pantokrator with property too, but it is small in comparison with the endowments of John, and Kinnamos informs his readers that Eirene spent 'whatever she was given' on others. Presumably John had given her the property in the first place. Manuel's wives do not seem to have had the economic resources that the native women did, and again this may be a function of their foreign birth. Bertha-Eirene seems to have had problems in paying John Tzetzes, from whom she had requested a metaphrasis of the *Iliad Allegories*, and there is no evidence for money in the hands of Maria of Antioch, unless one accepts Michael Jeffreys's suggestion that she was the patron of

[40] *Docheiariou*, no. 2, *Actes de Docheiariou*, ed. N. Oikonomides (Archives de l'Athos, 13, Paris, 1984), 54-59. Christodoulos: Τὸ ἴσον τοῦ δεσποινικοῦ πιττακίου τοῦ καταπεμφθέντος εἰς τὸ σέκρετον τοῦ Μυρελαίου καὶ καταστρωθέντος εἰς μῆνα ἰούνιον ιέ, ἡμέρᾳ τρίτῃ, ἰνδικτιῶνος δεκάτης, ed. F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, 6 vols (Vienna, 1840), 6, no. XI, 32-33; Τὸ ἴσον τοῦ πρακτικοῦ τῆς Λειψὼ καὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ Λέρῳ· δύο προαστείων, τοῦ τε Παρθενίου καὶ τῶν Τεμενίων, πρὸς δὲ καὶ τοῦ ἡμίσεος κάστρου τοῦ Παντελίου, *MM*, 6, no. XII, 34-44.

[41] *KecharitomeneTyp*, *Τυπικὸν τῆς σεβασμίας μονῆς τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς Κεχαριτωμένης τῆς ἐκ βάθρων νεουργηθείσης καὶ συστάσης παρὰ τῆς εὐσεβεστάτης αὐγούστης κυρᾶς Εἰρήνης τῆς Δουκαίνης κατὰ τὴν αὐτῆς πρόσταξιν καὶ γνώμην ὑφηγηθέν τε καὶ ἐκτεθέν*, *PG*, 127, 991-1128, ed. P. Gautier, 'Le typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè', *REB*, 43 (1985), 5-166.

the εἰσιτήριοι for Agnes of France. Even then, he has no suggestions about the source of her money, nor for other uses of it.[42] It is the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene, the widow of Andronikos Komnenos, who is the conspicuous spender of Manuel's reign, because as a widow she had more resources, although her position in the ranking was lower. Her patronage is mainly literary, unless her protection of Manganeios Prodromos can be seen as personal. Anna Dalassene and Eirene Doukaina exercised more economic power than the later imperial women, but not because Alexios Komnenos was a weak emperor. Rather, Anna had been head of the family and had control of its resources which by and large she used to aid the whole family, and Eirene Doukaina was a member of a family almost imperial.

The visible and prominent role which was played by Anna Dalassene has been one of the mainstays of the argument about Alexios's weakness, but it can be shown that her position does not support such an argument. Alexios did invent a place for her in the court hierarchy by ensuring that she was addressed by the title of *despoina* by the court.[43] Her sphere of authority was wide: the entire civil government was in her hands, and in the chrysobull by which Alexios made her regent, he declared her decisions to be above all present and future criticism,[44] an effective *carte blanche* normally only applicable to emperors. Anna's authority was tantamount to that of an emperor: she included herself in the imperial formula of ἡ βασιλεία ἡμῶν[45] when granting property to Christodoulos[46] as well as having her own formula of δεσποινική for signalling that a document was her own.[47] Yet such a complete division of authority between two people, described by Theophylact of Ochrid as a perfect

[42] M. Jeffreys, 'The vernacular εἰσιτήριοι for Agnes of France', *Byzantine Studies*, ed. M. Jeffreys, E. Jeffreys and A. Moffatt (Byzantina Australiensia, 1, Canberra, 1981), 101-115.
[43] *Al.*, III.ii.7, L, I, 110, S, 109.
[44] *Al.*, III.vi.3-8, L, I, 120-22, S, 116-118.
[45] *MM*, VI, 32, 33, 35.
[46] *MM*, VI, 32.
[47] *MM*, VI, 32-33.

division between two suns,[48] does not imply weakness on the part of the emperor. As regent Anna had immense power and was not averse to using it against Alexios's inclinations in order to aid causes and people she particularly favoured, like the monks of Docheiariou[49] and especially the monk Christodoulos,[50] but she used it primarily to keep the throne safe for the son on whose behalf she had already expended her energies for years. There is no doubt that Anna Dalassene was ambitious, but the salient point is that her ambition was not personal, but for her family.[51] Such ambition is not any less strong or ruthless, but it is ambition that the family can trust. In the context of the time, given the dangers Alexios faced and the insecurity of his grasp on the throne particularly in the eighties and early nineties, entrusting supreme authority to a mother he knew on past record that he could trust was the height of good sense. The result proves it: Alexios Komnenos remained emperor until he died despite criticism which would have brought any other emperor down.[52]

The fate of Anna Dalassene is another pointer to the decisive character of her son. Her authority had been given to her by Alexios, and when he no longer wanted her in the position to which he had raised her, her end was swift. Alexios did not face any resistance in displacing the *despoina*, for his was the ultimate authority, and her position depended on his will. She is the woman *par excellence* to whom Alexios is supposed to have deferred. Yet the year of her death is unknown and the circumstances of her retirement obscure. Alexios of course admired and respected his mother, but this should be seen as a virtue

[48] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 240.
[49] *Docheiariou*, no. 2, ed. Oikonomides, 54-59.
[50] *MM*, VI, 25-39.
[51] Anthropologists have noted this phenomenon in modern Greece: see *Gender and power in rural Greece*, ed. J. Dubisch (Princeton, 1986), 27. In the same volume, M. Dimen, 'Servants and sentries: women, power and social reproduction in Kriovrisi', 53-67; S.D. Salamone and J.B. Stanton, 'Introducing the *nikokyra*: ideality and reality in social process', 97-120.
[52] Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 114.

rather than a weakness.[53] Admiration and respect are not the same as submission, and it is clear that Alexios was never the tool of his mother. The only near contemporary who mentions her retirement is Zonaras, who alleges that Anna realised that Alexios was becoming tired of her and so retired before she could be removed, to live in honourable and imperial state for the rest of her life.[54] From another source comes a whiff of heresy.[55] Anna Komnene carefully does not relate the circumstances surrounding her grandmother's disappearance from the court, but merely mentions her death as part of another story. This silence on her part lends weight to the suspicion of heresy, for it would have been very embarrassing for Anna to have had to admit that her pious grandmother had become involved in heresy.[56] The fact that Zonaras gives no hint of heresy is a point in Anna's favour but not a conclusive one, since relating such a story about the great-grandmother of the reigning emperor might have had grave consequences. Whether heresy was the reason for her retirement or an excuse on Alexios's part to remove his mother,[57] which unites the rumour of heresy and Zon-

[53] Admiration for parents has a long history. For the Roman approval of respect for mothers, see S. Dixon, *The Roman mother* (London, 1988), 13-40. For the Byzantine respect for the old, see A-M. Talbot, 'Old age in Byzantium', *BZ*, 77 (1984), 267-278. Children of widowed mothers who were also head of the family were expected by law to respect them and were forbidden to usurp their authority. For the Biblical exhortation to obey and respect parents, see Ephesians 6.1-4.

[54] Zonaras, XVIII. 24.9-11, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 746.

[55] Matthew of Edessa relates in his *Chronicle* that the mother of the emperor was a disciple of a heretic who worshipped Satan and that she was stripped of her rank and driven from court by her son. See S. Runciman 'The end of Anna Dalassena', *Melanges H. Gregoire: Annuaire de l'institute de philogie et d'histoire occidentales et slaves*, 9 (1949), 517-524, for an identification of this heretic with Blachernites.

[56] B. Leib, 'Les silences de Anna Comnène', *BS*, 19 (1958), 1-10.

[57] Similar accusations have been used for this purpose. See C. Galatariotou, 'Holy women and witches: aspects of Byzantine concepts of gender', *BMGS*, 9 (1984-5), 55-94: E. Janeway, *Man's world, women's place* (Harmondsworth, 1977), 137-140. See the interesting theory of R. Warnicke, *The rise and fall of Anne Boleyn* (Cambridge, 1989), that the real reason behind the fall of Anne Boleyn was the birth of a deformed foetus,which convinced Henry that she was a witch.

aras's statement that Alexios was tired of his mother's government, is immaterial for this enquiry. In the situation with which he was faced, Alexios took decisive action, which is not the response of a weak man who will be lost without his mother. There are no grounds for shifting the responsibility for Anna Dalassene's retirement on to the shoulders of another woman, for instance Eirene Doukaina. Although an influence in later years, by the witness of the *Alexiad* and Zonaras Eirene had not yet come to enjoy Alexios's confidence. Anna Komnene only begins to record the doings of her mother around the early 1100s and Zonaras records that Alexios turned to her in later life particularly when he was ill.[58] Eirene may have benefited from Anna Dalassene's retirement but there is no evidence that she engineered it.

The regeneration of the authority of the emperor is one facet of Alexios's reign, which represents the slow closing down of opportunities for other groups besides imperial women. Alexios's first decade was a time of crisis for him. A series of military defeats which damaged his prestige at home and abroad and decimated his armies necessitated the seizure of church treasure to build them up again, an act which provoked much criticism of his reign at home.[59] In these years Alexios was too preoccupied with holding the power he had won to be master of the entire situation. But with the military successes which restored faith in his right to rule, he had leisure to tighten control over other areas. The guilds and the senate felt the harshness of Alexios's will:[60] the foundation of the *Orphanotropheion* is

[58] *Al.*, XII.v.6-9, L, III, 73-75, S, 385-386, for the Anemas conspiracy of 1103; *Al.*, XII.iii, L, III, S, 374-378, for 1105, the first time Eirene accompanied Alexios on campaign. Zonaras, XVIII. 24.15-17, ed Büttner-Wobst, III, 747.

[59] See the two addresses by John the Oxite, ed. P. Gautier, 'Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite contre Alexis Ier Comnène', *REB*, 28 (1970), 5-55.

[60] Senate: Zonaras, XVIII. 29.23, ed. Bütter-Wobst, III, 766; Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 124. Guilds: S. Vryonis, 'Byzantine ΔHMOKPATIA and the guilds in the eleventh century', *DOP*, 17 (1963), 289-314; Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 125.

another manifestation of his determination to rid himself of those who disrupted order.[61] His attitude towards imperial women therefore should not come as a surprise. It is not remarkable that Alexios should have deferred to his mother in the early years of his reign, for she was competent and wholly to be trusted. But in the important matter of the succession, Alexios was his own man and even in the midst of sickness, his wife, who had a strong character herself, could not change his mind. The fact that she concentrated on doing so merely reveals that the emperor's decision was again absolute rather than being open to defiance and circumvention. The crisis moments of legitimization reveal what quieter times conceal, and the most revealing moment is after the danger is over, for victory is followed by repression.[62] The lessening visibility and effectiveness of imperial women over the period of the functioning Komnenian system are a result of the success of Alexios's male-dominated system, which ensured that women would only be recognised as their husband's wives, and gave men a real share in government. Before the Komnenian coup, women were visible in the sources to a much greater extent. Their visibility betokens a loss in male authority, a phenomenon so well known that women are accused of causing the crises which show their power. Although the eleventh century may no longer be regarded as a crisis in the traditional political and economic sense in which it once was, it was certainly a crisis for male authority. The disappearance of women during and after Alexios's reign, the system he set up and his own wife's conviction that all decisions had to be framed by him, reveal that Alexios, far from being 'faible devant les femmes', was weak before nobody, but a ruthless man with the strength to implement a ruthless regime.

[61] Magdalino, 'Innovations in government', below, 150-151; Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 123.

[62] G. Duby, 'Ideologies in social history', *Constructing the past: essays in historical methodology*, ed. J. le Goff and P. Nova (Cambridge, 1985), 151-165, esp. 158.

4

How the east was lost: the background to the Komnenian *reconquista*

Mark Whittow

During Alexios's lifetime a number of major shifts took place in the human and cultural geography of Europe and the middle east which have since proved to be decisive. In Spain the Christians of the north conquered the emirate of Toledo and with it gained control of the heartland of the Iberian peninsula. Alfonso VI's victory in 1085—four years after Alexios's coup—provoked an Islamic backlash, as the warrior Almoravids from Berber north Africa replaced the impotent *taifa* kingdoms. The Christians were thrown on the defensive, but despite alarms and temporary disasters, their grip on Toledo and the central *meseta* remained secure.[1]

In southern Italy the Normans invaded Sicily in 1061. Palermo, more important even than Toledo, and one of the great cities of the western Islamic world, fell less than six months after the battle of Manzikert in January 1072. Fighting would continue in the west of the island until the 1090s, and even in the thirteenth century a Muslim rebellion, one of whose centres was at Monte Iato, within half a day's journey of Palermo, would take over twenty years to crush. Yet despite this the Christian conquest of Sicily was decisive. Muslim culture was destroyed, and like Alfonso's conquest

[1] B.F. Reilly, *The kingdom of León-Castilla under king Alfonso VI, 1065-1109* (Princeton, 1988); S. de Moxó, *Repoblación y sociedad en la España medieval* (Madrid, 1979), 199-258, 283-308.

of Toledo, it marked a permanent change in the cultural geography of the Mediterranean world.[2]

Similarly, in the east, the Turkish invasions which overran Asia Minor after the battle of Manzikert were decisive. Like the Almoravids in Spain, the Komnenoi staged a twelfth-century recovery, but equally like Islamic Spain, the rally was only temporary. In the long run both cultures were doomed.

These late eleventh-century conquests, in Spain, Sicily and Asia Minor, have certain features in common; and comparison between them sheds an important light on Byzantine society, which in the context of this collection of papers may help toward an understanding of Alexios and his world.

The key point of comparison is that in each case the conquest was decisive, not because of the military consequences of a particular day's battle, nor yet because of political disunity among the defeated—although, of course, it is easy to identify these factors at work in Spain, Sicily and Asia Minor—but rather because in each region, one culture came up against another which was more militaristic, more violent, and—most important—more willing to make the sacrifices necessary to dominate the contested land.

This approach demands that one brackets, on the one hand, the Christians of western Europe with the Turks; and, on the other, western Europe's Islamic enemies with the Byzantines. At first sight this appears curious, but it might not have seemed such a strange idea to contemporaries. Several Byzantine authors equate the martial qualities of the Latins and Turks in contrast to the Byzantines, and it is one of the literary features of the *Alexiad* that its author describes both Latins and Turks as part of a barbarian storm, come from east and west to buffet the empire.[3] Consider too

[2] D.S.H. Abulafia, 'The end of Muslim Sicily', *Muslims under Latin rule, 1100-1300*, ed. J.M. Powell (Princeton, 1990), 103-133; for the Muslim revolt in the thirteenth century see F. Maurici, *L'emirato sulle montagne* (Palermo, 1987)—a reference for which I must thank Dr J. Johns of Wolfson College, Oxford.

[3] J. Shepard, 'Aspects of Byzantine attitudes and policy towards the west in the tenth and eleventh centuries', *Byzantium and the west c. 850-c. 1200*, Proceedings of the XVIII Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, ed. J.D. Howard-Johnston (Amsterdam, 1988), 96-100; Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, III.ix.1-2; VI.xi.3; XIII.vi.1; XIV.iii.1; XIV.vii.1-2, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols. (Paris 1937-45), I, 130-

the anonymous *Gesta Francorum*. Its author never mentions the Greeks as warriors. The only imperial troops he names as such are Pecheneg and Turkish mercenaries, servants of the *iniquus imperator*.[4] His Turkish opponents, however, win approval:

> What man [he writes in the aftermath of the hard-fought Crusader victory at Dorylaion] would dare to write of the skill and prowess and courage of the Turks, who thought that they would strike terror into the Franks, as they had done into the Arabs and Saracens, Armenians, Syrians and Greeks? ... They [that is the Turks] have a saying that they are of common stock with the Franks, and that no men, except the Franks and themselves, are naturally born to be *milites*. This is true, and nobody can deny it, that if only they had stood firm in the faith of Christ and holy Christendom...you could not find stronger, or braver or more skilful soldiers.[5]

From a western perspective Byzantine society was strange. Even a Spanish Jew, Benjamin of Tudela, would find it sufficiently curious later in the twelfth century to note that the Greeks, 'hire from amongst all nations warriors ... to fight with the Sultan of the Turks; for the natives are not warlike, but are as women who have no strength to fight.'[6]

The most acute western observer of Byzantine strangeness, it seems to me, was Odo of Deuil, in the empire during 1146-7 on the second Crusade. Odo disliked the Greeks, thought them peculiar,

131; II, 73; III, 108, 154, 172-173, tr. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1988), 124, 205-206, 410, 445, 458. Shepard's important article quoted above makes the best case for the similar language used of Latins and other barbarians in the *Alexiad* by concentrating on the comparison between the Latins and the Pecheneg and Cuman invaders of the Balkans, for which the *Alexiad* provides more material. The Turks, rather curiously, receive comparatively less attention, but even so the *Alexiad* does, either directly or by implication, attribute to them the same 'barbarian' characteristics of arrogance, enthusiasm for war and love of money credited to the Latins and Scyths: *Al.*, II.vi.8, L, I, 83, S, 89; IX.iii.1,3, L, II, 164-165, S, 274-275; XIV.v.5, L, III, 167, S, 453; XV.vi.7, L, III, 210, S, 488.

[4] *Gesta Francorum*, ed. and tr. R. Hill (London, 1962), 6, 9, 16.

[5] *Gesta Francorum*, 21.

[6] M.N. Adler, *The itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela* (London, 1907), 13.

fawning and treacherous, and believed that the second Crusade would have been well-occupied seizing Constantinople. However dislike need not render a critic unobservant, and where the evidence is available to test Odo's hostile account of the Byzantines and their world, the basis of his descriptions can generally be confirmed. For example, his observation that the walls of the Blachernai quarter of Constantinople were inferior to the main section of the city's land walls is still visible to any visitor today; similarly his accounts of Byzantine diplomatic practice—much wordy flattery, no mention of anything but good news—are confirmed by surviving examples of Byzantine court rhetoric, notoriously off-putting to twentieth- as well as twelfth-century westerners, foreign to Byzantine literary culture.[7]

Having left Constantinople, Odo and the French crusaders entered Asia Minor. He writes:

> Although [it] was formerly under Greek jurisdiction, the Turks now possess a great part and, after expelling the Greeks, have devastated another part; but where the Greeks still hold castles the two peoples divide the revenues. In such subjugation the Greeks retain the territories the Franks procured because they went in quest of Jerusalem;

—so much for Odo's estimation of the Alexian *reconquista*—he goes on:

> and the lazy people would have lost all if they had not defended themselves by importing *milites* from various nations, thus compelling gold to redeem gold. Nevertheless, they always lose (but since they possess much they cannot lose all at once), for mercenaries do not suffice a people without forces of its own. Nicomedia[8] first showed us this; set amongst thorns and brambles, her lofty ruins testify to her former glory and her present masters' inactivity. In vain does a certain estuary of the sea, which terminates [near Nicomedia] three days after rising [in

[7] Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*, ed. and tr. V.G. Barry (New York, 1948), 64 (walls); 26, 56-58 (Byzantine diplomatic rhetoric).

[8] That is the first city that the Crusaders came to on leaving Constantinople for the east.

> the Bosporos opposite Constantinople] offer her the advantage of good transportation.[9]

To Odo and his companions it was quite incomprehensible why the evidently wealthy aristocracy of the Komnenian court should fail to occupy and settle Nicomedia. The fact that these men appeared to prize martial qualities—he had seen, for example, the walls of the Blachernai palace painted with scenes of past victories—made their attitude no easier to understand.[10] As they went further into the fertile coastal valleys of western Asia Minor, where the Crusaders spent the winter of 1146-7, the Byzantine attitude came to appear simply perverse. Odo had perhaps too harrowing a time in the face of Turkoman attacks to consider his tormentors with any fraternal admiration, but there must have been many in the Crusader army, who, like the anonymous author of the *Gesta Francorum* half a century earlier, found the behaviour of the Turks more explicable than that of their supposed allies the Byzantines.[11]

Behind Odo's hostility lies a fundamental structural difference between western and Byzantine culture, and in particular the relationship in each society between military activity, political power and land. Western Europe was a militarised and militaristic society. The lay culture of its élite was pervaded by an ethos of heroic violence celebrated in the *chansons de geste*, which was already evolving toward the concept of chivalry that by the end of the twelfth century at the latest would make of the common Latin word *miles*, 'soldier', a term that could indicate noble or near-noble status—'knight'.[12]

[9] Odo of Deuil, 86-88.

[10] Odo of Deuil, 64; Adler, *Benjamin of Tudela*, 13; C. Mango, *The art of the Byzantine empire, 312-1453* (Sources and Documents in the History of Art, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1972), 224-228; A.P. Kazhdan, 'The aristocracy and the imperial ideal', *The Byzantine aristocracy IX to XIII centuries*, ed. M. Angold (BAR Int. Ser., 221, Oxford, 1984), 45-47.

[11] Odo of Deuil, 104-116.

[12] J. Bumke, *The concept of knighthood in the middle ages*, tr. W.T.H. and E. Jackson (New York, 1982), 72-94; J. Flori, *L'essor de la chevalerie, XI^e-XII^e siècles* (Travaux d'histoire éthico-politique, 46, Geneva, 1986), 119-219, 339-342; J.-P Poly, E. Bournazel, *La mutation féodale, X^e-XII^e siècles* (Paris, 1980), 155-192.

Political authority was fragmented; the idea of a centralised public authority still existed to some extent and in some areas, but the most characteristic feature of this society was the devolution of authority to individual lords who exercised it on their own lands as a wholly private right. Between c. 950 and c. 1150 their dominance of the countryside was expressed in a wave of castle-building and the formation of new nucleated settlements as the rural population was coerced and ordered to the benefit of their masters.[13]

Political power in western Europe depended upon creating personal ties among the warrior élite. Historians have traditionally focused on the classic feudal relationship where a man paid homage to a lord, thus becoming his vassal in exchange for a fief, usually a piece of land with its inhabitants, over whom the vassal would exercise judicial authority. In fact political groupings among the warrior élite also rested on ties of kinship, direct money payments and a whole range of other less formal means of patronage, but even so the system was still fundamentally based on land, which was not only the principal source of wealth, but also a coveted insurance of secure status. A man might serve for money in the military household of his lord for years, and as such become wealthy and respected by his contemporaries, but he would still want land to make his status secure and give him something to pass on to his heirs.[14] The obsession with land can be seen in almost any western European source of this period, but a particularly good example is the early twelfth-century *Ecclesiastical History* of Orderic Vitalis, which despite its rather misleading title gives a vivid picture of the contemporary Norman aristocracy in a series of protracted, convoluted and vicious struggles over the inheritance and possession of land.[15]

The association of a culture of heroic violence with a political system based on the possession of land was in any case a potent

[13] Poly and Bournazel, *Mutation féodale*, 59-103; R. Fossier, *Enfance de l'Europe*, 2 vols (Paris, 1982), I, 188-234.

[14] Poly and Bournazel, *Mutation féodale*, 104-54; a useful analysis of the power base behind two particular western magnates is found in D. Crouch, *The Beaumont twins* (Cambridge, 1986), 101-138.

[15] M. Chibnall, *The world of Orderic Vitalis* (Oxford, 1984), 121-128.

combination, but in the eleventh century the threat western Europe already represented to its less militarised neighbours was being enhanced by a growing population and increasing wealth. This meant more and better-armed warriors than before, but it also meant a growing pressure on resources, especially land. Even with partible inheritance and high death rates the existing stock could not provide for all the landless and ambitious young warriors western Europe produced.[16] As western Europe in the eleventh century grew increasingly prosperous and land-hungry, Islamic Spain and Sicily came to head the list of victims.

By contrast Byzantine society in Alexios's lifetime was very different. Clearly it is not enough simply to say that the Greeks were unwarlike. There is a truth in this. Violence and warfare played a more central role in Turkish and western culture than in Byzantine. But this is only relative, as the past history of Byzantine warfare against the Arabs proves. There was also in fact a growing strand of militarism in eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantine culture to which Kazhdan, amongst others, has drawn attention, and which is so evident in the *Alexiad*.[17]

More fundamental was the different relationship between land and power—in particular between land and political power at the centre. It is commonly presumed that a 'provincial base' of landed estates was a fundamental part of political power for a 'magnate' in the Byzantine world. The essential counterpart to influence in Constantinople was the network of kin and clientship in the provinces. It is also a widespread view that irresponsible behaviour by 'landed magnates' was a critical factor in hampering the efforts of central government, thus leading to the fall of Byzantine Asia Minor to the Turks. (Once they tended to be loosely called 'feudal magnates', but this has become too loaded a term in modern historiography; the interpretation, however, is essentially the same).[18] Arguably the opposite is nearer the truth.

[16] Fossier, *Enfance de l'Europe*, I, 87-287.

[17] Kazhdan, 'Aristocracy and the imperial ideal', 43-57; A. Kazhdan, A.W. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Berkeley, 1985), 106-116.

[18] M. Angold, *The Byzantine empire, 1025-1204* (London, 1984), 38-39; S. Vryonis, Jr., *The decline of medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the process of Islami-*

The examples of major Byzantine aristocrats enjoying power *based* on the land, in such a way that one can talk of a 'provincial base' are very rare and come from particular contexts. Too often a certain family is said to have its provincial base in a certain region solely because there is a reference to a member of the family being exiled to his *oikos* there.[19] Political opponents are exiled, by definition, to cut them off from support and render them impotent. Aristocrats would hardly have been sent to their provincial *oikoi* if it had been presumed that they would be among a powerful network of kin and clients which formed a major part of their political strength.

These references are no evidence for a provincial power base; they simply reveal that Byzantine aristocrats *owned* land in the provinces. The two are very different things, and we should not shy away from the idea that landownership was relatively divorced from political power. It is a familiar enough phenomenon elsewhere in Europe—the nineteenth-century Anglo-Irish aristocracy, or nineteenth- and twentieth-century Sicilian noble landowners are examples which come to mind.

The major exceptions to this are the magnates of the eastern frontier: the Skleroi, the Phokades, the Argyroi and other families who grew rich and powerful in the peculiar border world between Byzantium and Islam, heavily influenced by the very different social structures and culture of Armenia and the Caucasus. Families such as the Skleroi had built up a power base in the provinces which threatened central government. But their case is hardly typical, and more important their power had been broken in the

zation from the eleventh through the fifteenth century, (Berkeley, 1971), 72-78, 104-105; G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine state*, tr. J. Hussey, 2nd English edition (Oxford, 1968), 329-330; G. Ostrogorsky, *Pour l'histoire de la féodalité byzantine*, tr. H. Grégoire (Corpus Bruxellense Historiae Byzantinae, Subsidia 1, Brussels, 1954), 14: 'Il n'y a pointe de doute que ce processus [la féodalisation rapide de l'empire] ait été la cause principale de la décadence intérieure de l'empire byzantin qui aboutit fatalement à sa destruction totale.'

[19] For the term *oikos*, which can be translated literally but not very usefully as 'house' or 'household', see the study by P. Magdalino, 'The Byzantine aristocratic *oikos*', *The Byzantine aristocracy*, ed. Angold, 92-111.

great civil wars of the late tenth century.[20] It remains to be demonstrated that on the eve of Manzikert in 1071 even the great military families of the eastern frontier had important bases of provincial support that were in any way fundamental to their political power and position save as sources of part of their revenue.

So far I have examined this problem in detail only for the Thrakesion theme and a section of the Anatolikon in western Phrygia associated with Nikephoros Botaneiates.[21] In both areas what I was originally looking for was evidence of the Byzantine aristocracy and their power in the provinces, but what I found was an apparent blank.

First of all, I looked at the *strategoi* and judges of the Thrakesion. Leo VI, of course, says that *strategoi* should not own land in the provinces they ruled, but one knows that the contrary was the case for the Argyroi, the Phokades and the Skleroi in the tenth century. What I found was that, in all cases where there was sufficient evidence to judge, the *strategos* or judge was an outsider to the theme, and in many cases was evidently associated with Constantinople.[22]

Secondly, it is clear that some major aristocratic families did own estates in the Thrakesion. For example, Nikephoros Ouranos wrote a letter to the judge of the Thrakesion trying to avoid paying

[20] There are now important basic studies of the Argyroi, the Skleroi and the Phokades: J.-F. Vannier, *Familles byzantines: les Argyroi (IXe-XIIe siècles)* (ByzSorb, 1, Paris, 1975); W. Seibt, *Die Skleroi* (Byzantina Vindobonensia, 9, Vienna, 1976); I. Djurić, 'Porodika Foka', *ZbRad*, 17 (1976), 189-292; J.-C. Cheynet, 'Les Phocas', Appendix to G. Dagron, H. Mihãescu, *Le traité sur la guérilla (De velitatione) de l'empereur Nicéphore Phocas (963-969)* (Paris, 1986), 289-315. See also J.-C. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)* (ByzSorb, 9, Paris, 1990), which appeared after this paper was written.

[21] In the remainder of this paper I am in effect summarising the argument presented in my 1987 DPhil thesis: *Social and political structures in the Maeander region of western Asia Minor on the eve of the Turkish invasions*. The thesis is available for consultation in the Bodleian library, Oxford, and a revised version is currently being prepared for publication as an Oxford Historical Monograph. The following references are limited to the evidence specifically quoted in this paper.

[22] P. Noailles, A. Dain, *Les novelles de Léon le sage* (Paris, 1944), 282-285.

the *mitaton* on his estates.[23] Andronikos Doukas's interest in the region is well known thanks to the *praktikon*, a copy of which has survived in the Patmos archives.[24] Yet in these, and in other cases, there is no evidence that these men had what one can call a power base in the province. Nikephoros Ouranos is revealed through his letters and the account of a Muslim embassy to Basil II's court as a Constantinopolitan figure whose power rested on his loyalty to the emperor and his role in the inner bureaucracy of the imperial court.[25] The Doukai too are clearly seen in the sources as a family based on Constantinople. Their most important provincial estates were not in the Thrakesion but close to the capital in Bithynia and Thrace.[26]

Thirdly, and perhaps most important, the region is illuminated by three saints' *Lives*, those of St Nikephoros of Miletos, St Paul of Latros and St Lazaros of Mt Galesion. [27] The latter two were written by monks on Latros and Galesion respectively, shortly after their subjects' death. They both give a detailed picture of provincial life and they are keen, especially the *Life* of St Lazaros, to show off the influential contacts their respective saints enjoyed. Yet, again, they give a picture not of provincial magnates, but of a provincial gentry. Important people in these *Lives* are, without exception, outsiders to the theme. The local landowners amount to an isolated gentry cut off from Constantinople and its élites.

[23] Nikephoros Ouranos, ep. 42, ed. J. Darrouzès, *Épistoliers byzantins du X^e siècle*, (AOC, 6, Paris, 1960), 241-242.

[24] Patmos, no. 50, ed. M. Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, *Βυζαντινὰ ἔγγραφα τῆς μονῆς Πάτμου*, II, *Δημοσίων λειτουργῶν* (Athens, 1980), 7-20.

[25] Nikephoros Ouranos, epp., ed. Darrouzès, *Épistoliers byzantins*, 217-248; H.F. Amedroz, 'An embassy from Baghdad to the emperor Basil II', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1914), 915-942.

[26] D.I. Polemis, *The Doukai* (University of London Historical Studies, 22, London, 1968), 10-11.

[27] *Βίος τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νικηφόρου μοναχοῦ καὶ ἐπισκόπου Μιλήτου*, ed. H. Delehaye, 'Vita S. Nicephori episcopi Milesii', *AnalBoll*, 14 (1895), 133-161; *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Παύλου τοῦ νέου τοῦ ἐν τῷ Λάτρῳ*, ed. H. Delehaye, 'Vita S. Pauli iunioris in monte Latro', *AnalBoll*, 11 (1892), 19-74, 136-181; *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία καὶ ἄσκησις τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ θαυματουργοῦ Λαζάρου τοῦ ἐν τῷ Γαλησίῳ*, 'Vita S. Lazari', AASS, November III, 508-588.

Looking further to the east—closer to the central plateau of Anatolia—we come to Phrygia, where, according to Attaleiates and Skylitzes, was the site of Nikephoros Botaneiates's *oikos* at Lampe, from which he launched his successful coup in 1078.[28]

Nikephoros Botaneiates is, of course, the classic example of the irresponsible magnate whose behaviour brought the ruin of Byzantine Asia Minor. Yet, again, if one examines the evidence for the events of 1078-9 in detail, a rather curious picture emerges: Nikephoros not as a powerful magnate gathering his loyal provincial supporters, but rather Nikephoros as a beached whale, stranded in what amounted to internal exile ever since he was suspected of deserting the Doukas cause at the battle of Zompos in 1075.[29]

When he came to march on Constantinople, Attaleiates cannot disguise the fact that he had very little support. Until he secured Turkish allies, this was not a military expedition but a furtive dash across countryside. The only local support he had was the 'three hundred men of Choma', who are not a Botaneiates family retinue, but the remainder of his forces as *strategos* of the Anatolikon.[30]

As for the eastern magnates who are said to have supported him—Straboromanos, Synadenos, Goudeles and Kabasilas—on examination each one of them owed their power not to landed estates in Anatolia, but to their role as imperial servants and courtiers with careers focused on Constantinople.[31] The Botaneiates coup of 1078 thus turns out to be another event in Constantinopolitan politics, not a case of a provincial magnate using his local power base for despicable purposes.

[28] Michael Attaleiates, *Ἱστορία*, ed. I. Bekker, (CSHB, Bonn, 1853), 242, 253; *Ἡ συνέχεια τῆς χρονογραφίας τοῦ Ἰωάννου Σκυλίτση*, ed. E.T. Tsolakes (Ἑταιρεία Μακεδονικῶν Σπουδῶν, 105, Thessalonike, 1968), 172; K. Belke, N. Mersich, *Phrygien und Pisidien*, (TIB, 7, Vienna, 1990), 321-322.

[29] Nikephoros Bryennios, *Ὕλη ἱστορίας*, II, 15, ed. P. Gautier, *Nicephori Bryennii historiarum libri quattuor* (CFHB, 9, Brussels, 1975), 171.

[30] Attaleiates, 263-266; Bryennios, III, 17, ed. Gautier, 243; *Al.*, III.ix.1, L, I, 130, S, 124; K. Belke, N. Mesich, *Phrygien und Pisidien*, 222.

[31] *SkylCont*, ed. Tsolakes, 172; C. Hannick, G. Schmalzbauer, 'Die Synadenoi', *JÖB*, 25 (1976), 125-130; the scattered evidence for these families is assembled in Whittow, *Social and political structures*, 434-436.

The conclusion that I would draw from this is that on the eve of the Turkish invasions Byzantium did not have a militarised aristocracy based in the provinces and linked with central government and the imperial court. Great families who were important lived in Constantinople—that fact is frequently attested. They had estates elsewhere, but their power was dependent on their position at court where they could be irrigated by the 'fountain of gold', as the *Mousai* puts it, or, in other words, be the recipients of court salaries paid in gold coin out of the proceeds of taxation.[32]

This feature of Byzantine society had many advantages, reflected in the ability of the empire to maintain political unity from the seventh century onwards, but the Turkish invasions presented a new threat to Greek culture in Asia Minor, and one to which centralised imperial control of itself was not an effective answer. Once the Arabs had lost interest in an immediate conquest of Constantinople after the failure of the siege in 718, the Arab threat was limited to raids which however devastating at the time, would in due course retire, leaving the Byzantines to resume their occupation of the ground. Arab settlement was limited to certain favoured areas of strategic importance in the east such as Cilicia, Melitene (modern Eski Malatya) or Qaliqala (modern Erzerum).[33] The Turks however soon made it obvious that they wished to stay in Anatolia.

The Turks were not invincible; their herds were as vulnerable as Byzantine villages; but their defeat or containment required an effective system of local defence based on a network of castles whose garrisons were prepared to launch counter-strikes in response to Turkish raids, and above all a determination not to let any ground go by default—in other words a system of defence

[32] *Mousai*, 313-321, ed. P. Maas, 'Die Musen des Kaisers Alexios I', *BZ*, 22 (1913), 348-362, ed. tr. R.H. Jordan and C. Roueché (BBTT, 4.2, Belfast, 1996); the best description of the 'fountain of gold' in operation is that left by the tenth-century Italian, Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, VI, 10, ed. J. Becker, *Liudprandi Opera*, (MGH, SRG, Hannover and Leipzig, 1915), 157-158, tr. M. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine monetary economy, c. 300-1450* (Cambridge, 1985), 191.

[33] M. Whittow, *The making of orthodox Byzantium, 600-1025* (London, 1995), ch. 5.

similar to that protecting the Christian frontier in Spain.[34] If this had existed, the Turkish presence in Anatolia might well have been, if not short-lived, then at least on Byzantine terms. In the event however the Turks faced very little opposition.

The Byzantines do seem to have been well aware of the problem. Between 1162 and 1173 Manuel I ordered the construction of a series of castles to protect the region around Adramyttion, Pergamon and Chliara in western Asia Minor. The plan seems to have been successful, but it was a very limited achievement.[35] To do more would have required people and resources in quantities that would only have become available if the Byzantine ruling élite had themselves been committed to a constant battle for the possession of land. Since, as I have argued, unlike western Europe, land was not the fundamental basis of political power in Byzantium, this was not a commitment that any significant section of the Byzantine élite was prepared to make.

For the Komnenian attempts at reconquest, including those during Alexios's reign, which are of especial interest to this volume, this has important implications. Firstly, the Komnenian *reconquista* was, unlike that in contemporary Spain, entirely dependent on imperial expeditions and imperial victories. Whereas Alfonso VI could ride with the tide, attempting to harness the natural conquering qualities of the society he ruled, Alexios, by contrast, was on the receiving end of a similar phenomenon. Secondly, this would explain the otherwise curious feature of Alexios's reign that although we do hear of refugees from the Turks, there are no signs in the sources of émigré pressure for reconquest. Finally, it sheds an interesting light on Alexios and his reign that the Komnenoi are of course a major example of a family which had owned estates in Asia Minor, but which showed no inclination to stay and fight.

[34] M. González Jiménez, 'Frontier and settlement in the kingdom of Castile (1085-1350)', *Medieval frontier societies*, ed. R. Bartlett and A. McKay (Oxford, 1989), 49-74; J.F. Powers, *A society organized for war* (Berkeley, 1988).

[35] Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. J.-L. van Dieten-(CFHB 11/1, Berlin and New York, 1975), 150; H. Ahrweiler, 'L'histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne entre les deux occupations turques (1081-1317), particulièrement au XIII[e] siècle', *TM*, 1 (1965), 133-137.

5

'Father' or 'scorpion'? Style and substance in Alexios's diplomacy

Jonathan Shepard

Diplomacy, in the restricted sense of 'the conduct of relations with foreign powers or foreign individuals, or with groupings of those individuals' receives prominent coverage in Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*. One of Anna's fundamental themes is of her father as the great helmsman, steering the 'ship of state' through 'seas of troubles'.[1] Alexios's handling of the First Crusade is an elaborate set-piece, illustrating his skill in protecting the empire—or at least the City—from a huge onrush of Latins, who might easily have been manoeuvred by their leaders into seizing Constantinople. This was only the most spectacular of many attempts upon the empire from all sides: 'great disorders and wave upon wave of troubles came together in the period of my father's reign. For at one and the same time the Scyths from the north, the Kelts from the west and the Ishmaelites from the east were stirred up (against us), not to mention the perils from the sea or the barbarians who had mastery of the sea'.[2] Anna continues in the same vein: 'As soon as [my father]

[1] Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, X.ii.1, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols. (Paris, 1937-45), II, 189-190, tr. E.R.A. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1988), 295; cf. *Al.*, III.ix.2, L, I,131, S,125. For similar imagery of waves of troubles bearing down upon Alexios, see *Al.*, VI.xiv.1, L, II, 81, S, 212; *Al.*, XII.v.1.3, L, III, 67, 68-69, S, 380, 381-2; *Al.*, XIV.iv.3, 4, L, III, 160, 161, S, 449, 450; *Al.*, XIV.vii.1, L, III, 172, S, 458. Cf. G.T. Kolias, ' Ἡ ἐξωτερικὴ πολιτικὴ Ἀλεξίου Ι Κομνηνοῦ (1081-1118)', *Ἀθήνα*, 59 (1955), 241-2, 247-8.

[2] *Al.*, XIV.vii.1-2, L, III, 173.1-14, S, 458.

mounted the imperial chariot, all the menaces hurtled towards him from every side: the Kelt was on the move and pointed his spear (at him), and the Ishmaelite bent his bow and all the race of nomads and all the Scyths pressed down on him with countless wagons'.[3] The simultaneousness of the avalanche of menaces and of Alexios's accession is wholly fortuitous—perish the thought that Alexios might have been one of the 'menaces' besetting the empire with his 1081 rebellion.[4] We are to believe that Alexios's struggle to retain the throne, and the survival of the Roman empire were one and the same thing, and that this is largely a matter of 'foreign affairs'. Not that revolts against Alexios or court conspiracies are passed over in silence: in a revealing synopsis of the situation at the time of the Crusade, Anna avows that Alexios 'kept in check the barbarian world all around, which was restless but had not yet broken out into open hostility, with titles and gifts (ἀξιώμασι...καὶ δωρεαῖς), while he restrained the onsurge of the Kelts by all possible means and **no less** the sedition of his own subjects—in fact he suspected them **even more** and took pains to guard against them in every way, cleverly (ἐντέχνως) stymieing their schemes' (my emphasis).[5] But for all this frankness, Anna's references to the 'schemes' are seldom extensive. The encounters with 'barbarians', receive more detailed attention and, in the case of the First Crusade at least, elaborate literary polish.[6]

[3] *Al.*, XIV.vii.2, L, III, 173.16-21, S, 458-9.

[4] While occasionally blaming the empire's predicament on Alexios's predecessors (*Al.*, III.ix.1, L, I, 130-131, S, 124-125; *Al.*, III.xi.5, L, I, 138, S, 130; *Al.*, XV.x.5, L, III, 229, S, 505), Anna generally refrains from attempting to explain the barbarian inroads. She does not follow Skylitzes, Attaleiates or Zonaras in interpreting them as divine punishment: see P. Magdalino, 'Aspects of twelfth-century Byzantine *Kaiserkritik*', *Speculum*, 58 (1983), 332.

[5] *Al.*, XIV.iv.4, L, III, 161.1-7, S, 449-450. For a forthright statement of Alexios's fears of plots in his entourage even while campaigning against Bohemond, see *Al.*, XIII.viii.6, L, III, 116.19-21, S, 417; cf. *Al.*, XII.v.3, L, III, 68-69, S, 381-382.

[6] A very perceptive assessment of Anna's account of the First Crusade has been presented by R.-J. Lilie, 'Der Erste Kreuzzug in der Darstellung Anna Komnenes', *Varia* II, *Poikila Byzantina*, 6 (Bonn, 1987), 49-148. Lilie concludes that Anna was primarily concerned with the literary aspects of her work, and sought graphically to portray her father as the saviour of the empire from

The *Alexiad* and the *Mousai*

This image of 'every foreign people raging against the Roman empire'[7] and this emphasis on foreign affairs as the emperor's particular concern is not unique to Anna's *Alexiad*. It can be found painted in similar tones in the *Mousai*. Alexios does, of course, have much else to say on necessary imperial qualities such as self-discipline, regard for the law, the setting of a moral example for one's subjects and the overriding importance of 'virtue' with a heavy (and explicit) evocation of the *Epistles* of St Paul (Cf. *Eph.* 6:13-17; *I Thess.* 5:8).[8] But when Alexios comes to instance the uses of 'virtue', the intimidation and repulse of the barbarians figure prominently, and it is the external threats that Alexios lists in a brief review of the early years of his reign. Alexios, like Anna, acknowledges that such threats shaded over into a Cretan revolt and secession by 'Cypriots fleeing governance by laws', 'and I leave aside the men within who rose up in arms, those ever trying to drag down authority granted from above'; the Trinity and the Mother of God had given them short shrift, and so will Alexios.[9] Alexios's poem is also reminiscent of Anna in its imagery of an empire—more precisely, a city—surrounded on all sides (κυκλόθεν) by enemies, and variants on the term used in this context or on this basic theme occur eight or nine times in the poem.[10] Constantinople may once again be encircled by greedy

mortal peril; chronology was subordinate to this aim, and technical terms and factual details were not her main concern.

[7] *Al.*, XII.v.3, L, III, 68.29-69.1, S, 381-382.

[8] *Mousai*, I, especially 239, 254, 267-271, ed. P. Maas, 'Die Musen des Kaisers Alexios I', *BZ*, 22 (1913), 343-362. (Renderings are my own, but with cognisance taken of the forthcoming translation of R.H. Jordan and C. Roueché (BBTT, 4.2, Belfast, 1996). There is also a strong element of classical Greek dictums as in the Heraclitean 'all things are in flux and are wedded to decay' (I, 244); cf. 'know thyself' (I, 246).

[9] *Mousai*, I, 294-301.

[10] *Mousai*, I, 106, 120, 131, 167, 256, 283, 325, 339, 412. Cf. especially the words put into Alexios's mouth at the council at Blachernai where he justified his appropriation of church treasures at the beginning of his reign: he had found 'the empire encircled on all sides by barbarians (πανταχόθεν κυκλουμένην βαρβάροις)', *Al.*, VI.iii.3, L, II, 47.4, S, 185.

foreigners 'trying to consume the great multitudes of the envied City'.[11]

The tone of Alexios's first *Mousa* is highly defensive. Alexios mentions the extent of the lands occupied by the oppressed 'children of Rome' and he considers the possibility that his poem's dedicatee, John, will gain power over other peoples (as traditionally befitted a Roman emperor).[12] Even this notion of *dilatatio imperii* is linked with the sense of encirclement: 'perhaps you will rule the nations that encircle us'.[13] In the most bellicose passage, the achievement claimed by Alexios is merely the repulse of the 'horseman from a western land' and other 'countless ones that surround us'. They are said to have been 'routed and destroyed', but 'in many ways' (πολυτρόπως), a term implying means other than overt warfare and reminiscent of both Anna's and Ekkehard of Aura's characterisations of Alexios.[14] When Alexios takes stock of his experience as emperor, he cites first and foremost the immense wealth of Constantinople, 'a fountain of gold', which should be gladly received and as gladly distributed.[15] That Alexios has foreigners in mind is suggested by his next recommendation: accumulate 'many things' in your strong rooms 'so that with these you may stop the greed of the nations who are on the move all around us just as long ago'.[16] Alexios recalls his own achievement in coping thus with 'the massed movement hither from the west',

[11] *Mousai*, I, 326-327.

[12] *Mousai*, I, 106, 132, 412.

[13] *Mousai*, I, 106.

[14] *Mousai*, I, 122. Anna refers to him as 'skilfully' (ἐντέχνως) fending off the plots of his domestic enemies: *Al.*, XIV.iv.4, L, III, 161.6, S, 450. Ekkehard mentions pejoratively 'the thousand-formed guile' of Alexios: *Frutolfi et Ekkehardi chronica necnon anonymi chronica imperatorum*, ed. tr. F.J. Schmale and I. Schmale-Ott (Darmstadt, 1972), 134-135; cf. Orderic Vitalis's description of Alexios as 'a prolific and ingenious master of the art of deception': Orderic Vitalis, *Historia aecclesiastica*, ed. tr. M. Chibnall, I-VI (Oxford, 1969-1980), V, 46-47.

[15] *Mousai*, I, 312. A comparable image of Constantinople is offered by Benjamin of Tudela, who visited the city in 1168: tr. in A. Sharf, *Byzantine Jewry from Justinian to the Fourth Crusade* (London, 1971), 135-136.

[16] *Mousai*, I, 324-325; cf. G. Kolias, 'Βυζαντινὴ Διπλωματία', *Πολιτικὴ Ἐπιθεώρησις*, 3 (1946), 63.

an unmistakeable allusion to the Crusade[17] and an expression of his concern that the First Crusade would not be the last. And it is presumably to foreigners as well as to Romans that officials are to present gifts and rewards 'readily and with a gentle manner', although it is from within the City and thus mainly from natives that criticism of sluggish or sharp-tongued officials will come.[18] Alexios is advising his son what should be done 'in case in some way the might of a countless army should rise up', not only from the west but from 'many of our enemies who circle round the City'.[19]

If Alexios in his first *Mousa* has scarcely anything to say about warfare and fighting, his second poem, or such of it as survives, devotes much attention to John's robust physique and martial prowess.[20] Here it is John, rather than the enemy, that is said to have 'a numberless army' and ample equipment.[21] Nonetheless, the tone is one of resignation rather than triumphalism: 'I would not deem it right that you should give up toiling and labouring in arms, when enemies are on the move against the sons of the Ausones'.[22] For all the bravado, the object of the exercise is primarily defensive: that the borders should not be pressed back further by enemies trying to hem the Romans in.[23] The moral of the poem is that however strong John's army may appear to be, 'you stand in need of an ally from above, you stand in need of higher power', in order to surmount 'your trials still obscure'.[24] Proud and interested as the old general undoubtedly was in his son's martial qualities, he does not extol them as the key to a successful reign.[25]

[17] *Mousai*, I, 330.
[18] *Mousai*, I, 342-351.
[19] *Mousai*, I, 337-339.
[20] *Mousai*, II, 21-26, 49-69.
[21] *Mousai*, II, 73, 75-76.
[22] *Mousai*, II, 21-23.
[23] *Mousai*, II, 24-25.
[24] *Mousai*, II, 71-72, 78.
[25] There are obvious methodological hazards in drawing inferences from the contrast between the two poems, especially as one is incomplete. Moreover, their precise date is uncertain though it is, in my view, reasonable to take them both as works of Alexios's last years, and not separated from each other by a lengthy interval: Maas, 'Musen', 366-367; H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche*

This is not to say that Alexios advocated diplomatic rather than military methods on principle. He had, especially in the early years of his reign,[26] shown relentless energy for large-scale campaigning. But in those early years he had no alternative but to try to come to terms with at least one set of enemies while planning a campaign against other foes.[27] Diplomacy was thus thrust upon Alexios from the moment that he seized the throne—an action which itself involved intense parleying and negotiating with rivals.[28] This was, in a sense, domestic 'diplomacy', and it had much in common with his dealings with foreigners. Alexios's objective in his early years in power was the limited one of survival. Judging by the *Mousai*, Alexios was still thinking in these negative terms in the last years of his reign: allusions to enemies abound and Alexios conceives of his heir falling 'among hostile men unarmed',[29] a figure of speech, of course, but also an indication that the emperor's political and personal survival still seemed in the balance. And Alexios's first item of empirical advice is on how to avert the fall of Constantinople to foreign armies. Mentions of some future *reconquista*, in contrast, are few and tentative. Alex-

profane Literatur der Byzantiner, II (Munich, 1978), 160. Nonetheless, it seems significant that the first poem offers, besides much moralising, some specific recommendations and presumably registers Alexios's working priorities, whereas the second (in so far as its contents are known) seems essentially to be enjoining faith in the Lord of Hosts as the one sure means of victory, a conventional enough sentiment.
[26] Below, 92.
[27] As is recognised by Anna: *Al.*, III.xi.5, L, I, 138, S, 130. Similarly Alexios is described as 'hitting with both fists the barbarians setting upon him from either side, and as it were manoeuvring around from Byzantium, (his) centre...': *Al.*, VI.xi.3, L, II, 73.23-25, S, 206. Anna expressly recognises that Alexios had to call on the Seljuk sultan's aid against the Normans in 1081: *Al.*, IV.ii.1, L, I. 146.9-10, S, 137.
[28] *Al.*, II.vi.4-viii.4, L, I, 81-90, S, 87-94; *Al.*, II.x.1-2, L, I, 92-93, S, 96-97; *Al.*, III.ii.1-7, L, I, 106-110, S, 105-109; cf. John Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν*, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst, III (CSHB, Bonn, 1897), 726-727, 731-733.
[29] *Mousai*, I, 258.

ios's self-portrait is that of a beleaguered emperor whose wits have 'been swept away by the onrush of events'.[30]

In his emphasis on the onrush of events, to which he had to respond day by day, Alexios foreshadows the *Alexiad*, where he is depicted as beset by surrounding peoples in terms very similar to those of the first *Mousa*.[31] In this respect at least, the emperor's review of his reign accords closely with the public presentation in the *Alexiad*, and there is no reason to doubt that Anna's general portrayal of the reign as well as many details and anecdotes were inspired by what she had heard from her father's lips. To that extent, Alexios's private opinions and his public stance were at one. He and his daughter were, no doubt, mindful that the role of champion of one's people against seething hordes of would-be marauders was at once heroic and politic: it could gain gratitude and legitimacy for the regime from the emperor's subjects. The sharp division of humanity into 'us', 'the honoured people, the Ausones, reared on glory and manifestly free' and 'the barbarians', 'the nations that encircle us'[32] represents a major over-simplification. But the *Mousai* constitute evidence that Alexios really did view himself in this light, as the deliverer of 'the children of New Rome'. This was a self-image projected outwards to foreigners as well as to his own subjects. Alexios declined the proposal of Count Raymond of Toulouse that he should become the leader of the Crusaders on the grounds that 'he feared that the Alemanni (*sic*), Hungarians and Cumans and other savage peoples would ravage his empire, if he himself made the journey [to Jerusalem] with the pilgrims'.[33] Alexios's excuse does not seem to have carried much conviction with Count Raymond.[34] But his harping on the exposed

[30] *Mousai*, I, 304-305, 310. The rush of time is a potent motif in the poem: cf. *Mousai*, I, 185-186, 211, 216.

[31] Above, 71.

[32] *Mousai*, II, 40-41; I, 106. Below, 118-119, 130.

[33] *Le 'Liber' de Raymond d'Aguilers*, ed. J.H. Hill and L.L. Hill (Paris, 1969), 41; tr. J.H. Hill and L.L. Hill (Philadelphia, 1968), 23.

[34] Alexios's strategic priorities lay closer to home: below, 90-91. Alexios's apprehensions about the Cumans were not wholly feigned if, as Gautier argued strongly, their massive invasion in support of Pseudo-Diogenes should be dated to 1095: 'Le synode des Blachernes (fin 1094). Étude

position of the empire must have contributed to the image of a beleaguered empire given in some western chronicles.[35]

A comprehensive survey of Alexios's diplomacy would, of course, entail an enquiry into the situation on all the empire's fronts. One would, in particular, need to gauge the extent to which the situation altered over the thirty-seven years of the reign. Alexios's first *Mousa* focuses on the 'long ago' years[36] and although his tone is defensive and apprehensive as to the future, he does imply that the empire has gained at least a respite. In fact the last ten years of his reign saw the Balkan territories relatively secure against determined aggression from westerners or steppe-nomads, while ground had been regained years earlier in Asia Minor.[37] Things seem to have been going better than Alexios's tone suggests. Our purpose here is less to probe this than to raise various questions about the methods and assumptions of Alexios's diplomacy. We shall not examine closely the actual accomplishments.

The following questions arise. What were the principal methods used by Alexios in his dealings with foreigners? Were they the same as those used by his predecessors, or are there significant differences? Was the diplomacy as 'reactive' as the

prosopographique', *REB*, 29 (1971), 282-283. Anna emphasises the diversity of strategic commitments—including vigilance against Cuman attacks—of Byzantine forces on the eve of the Crusade: *Al.*, XIV.iv.3, L, III, 160.23-28, S, 449.

[35] Alexios's messages to the west in the earlier 1090s gave the impression that 'pagans' were at the gates of Constantinople: Bernold of St Blaise, *Chronicon* s.a. 1095, *MGH SS*, V (Hanover, 1844), 462; ep. 1, ed. H. Hagenmeyer, *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088-1100* (Innsbruck, 1901), 133, 134; M. de Waha, 'La lettre d'Alexis I Comnène à Robert I le Frison', *B*, 47 (1977), 119-120, 123. Orderic Vitalis, drawing on a source sympathetic to Alexios, states, 'countless attacking armies marched against him from the four corners of the earth, attempting to slay him and seize his kingdom': Orderic, *Hist. aeccl.*, IV, 16-17.

[36] *Mousai*, I, 282-284. A comprehensive review of Alexios's diplomacy at work is offered by Kolias, 'Ἐξωτερικὴ πολιτική', 247-288.

[37] See, e.g. F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène, I, Essai sur le règne d'Alexis I Comnène* (Paris, 1900), 135-136, 239-245, 266-7; C. Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey* (London, 1968), 80, 85; M. Angold, *The Byzantine empire 1025-1204. A political history* (London, 1984), 112, 128.

Mousai and the *Alexiad* encourage us to suppose, or can a more consistent, long-term policy be discerned? Is there any indication that Alexios's mode of diplomacy altered during his long reign? And anyway, can we really talk of the diplomacy of Alexios at all? It was his mother, Anna Dalassene, who oversaw the operations of government in Constantinople for the first fifteen or so years of the reign.[38] And if a distinctive emphasis upon some techniques is discernible, what are the reasons? Are these changes a matter of substance, or merely of style? And did they prove to be to Alexios's advantage?

Methods of diplomacy

The first impression which the *Mousai* and the *Alexiad* inspire is one of continuity in diplomacy. Alexios's first piece of practical advice to John Komnenos is to husband reserves of valuables so as to be able to dispense them to foreign aggressors, or potential aggressors, stuffing 'the opened jaws' of the barbarian hosts.[39] The supposition that barbarians are motivated primarily by greed and envy of the Romans can be found in Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos's *De administrando imperio*:[40] the dispensation of gifts will disarm, or enlist the services of, the Pechenegs and, presumably, other northerners, too, albeit only for a brief while.[41] Michael Psellos ascribes the Romans' predominance to their possession of 'titles and money', and to the prudent and modulated distribution

[38] *Al.*, III.vi.3-6, L, I, 120-122, S, 117-118; Zonaras, III, 731; P. Gautier, *Théophylacte d'Achrida, discours, traités, poésies*, (CFHB, 16/1, Thessalonike, 1980), 91-92 (introduction); cf. F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches*, I.2 (Munich, 1925), no. 1073.

[39] *Mousai*, I, 335. Comparison might be drawn with Kekaumenos, who warned the emperor ever to be on the alert for a siege of Constantinople. However, his practical advice concerns the stocking of weapons and engines of war, without mentioning gold or gifts: ed. G.G. Litavrin, *Strategikon. Sovety i rasskazy Kekavmena* (Moscow, 1972), 288-289.

[40] Constantine VII, *De administrando imperio*, ch. 13, ed. G. Moravcsik and R.J.H. Jenkins (CFHB, 1, Washington, DC, 1967), 66-67; cf. *prooimion*, 44-45.

[41] Constantine VII, *DAI*, chs. 1, 4, 8, ed. Moravcsik and Jenkins, 48-49, 50-53, 56-57.

of these.[42] Alexios's emphasis on maintaining stocks of treasure would seem to place him squarely in the tradition of 'hand-out diplomacy', though we should note that the caveat sounded by Psellos about the importance of modulation is missing. In fact Alexios seems to recommend boundless generosity: gold should be distributed 'unstintingly' (ἀφθόνως), and the gifts are to be handed over with a good grace.[43] The theme of Alexios's liberality is taken up by Anna Komnene. She claims that 'there is no one whom he did not inundate with good things'.[44] At this point she is referring to Alexios's subjects as the recipients of 'honorary titles ... and great gifts', but elsewhere she indicates that barbarians, too, were bought off or won over by spectacular largesse. 'Titles and gifts' hold whole peoples in check for a while, at least,[45] although, she complains, 'this is the nature of every barbarian people: mouth agape for gifts and money but not in the least disposed to do that for which the money has been offered!'[46] Anna represents her father as coming to regret 'those indescribable gifts and the piles of gold lavished on the Crusaders.[47] But Alexios's counsel in the *Mousai* suggests that he never abandoned the ready recourse to gifts which is chronicled in the *Alexiad* in respect of Turks, steppe-nomads, the German emperor and the Crusaders.[48] He continued

[42] ' ἀξιωμάτων...καὶ χρημάτων', Michael Psellos, *Χρονογραφία*, ed. E. Renauld, *Michel Psellos, Chronographie*, 2 vols (Paris, 1926), I, 132; tr. E.R.A. Sewter, *Fourteen Byzantine rulers* (Harmondsworth, 1966), 170.

[43] *Mousai*, I, 319, 342-345. Above, 71-72.

[44] *Al.*, XII.v.1, L, III, 67.27-28, S, 381.

[45] *Al.*, XIV.iv.4, L, III, 161.1-3, S, 449.

[46] *Al.*, XIV.ii.13, L, III, 153.8-10, S, 444.

[47] *Al.*, XIV.ii.2, L, III, 146.26-28, S, 439. Alexios himself was already in June 1098 stressing that he had cooperated to the best of his ability with the Franks, 'and have paid out on them amounts that no one could calculate': ep. 11, ed. Hagenmeyer, 153 (redateable, in Hagenmeyer's view, to March-April, 1098: *ibid.*, 78, 296).

[48] See, e.g., *Al.*, VI.x.8, L, II, 70, S, 203; *Al.*, VI.xii.8, L, II, 78, S, 209; *Al.*, VI.xiii.4, L, II, 81, S, 211; *Al.*, XI.i.2, L, III, 8, S, 334; *Al.*, XI.ii.5, L, III, 13, S, 337; *Al.*, XI.iii.9-10, L, III, 15-16, S, 339-340; *Al.*, XV.vi.6-7, L, III, 210, S, 488 (Turks); *Al.*, VII.vi.3, L, II, 106, S, 230; *Al.*, VIII.iv.3, L, II, 136-137, S, 254 (Cumans); *Al.*, III.x.4, L, I, 134, S, 127 (Henry IV of Germany; cf. Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 1077); *Al.*, X.vii.5, L, II, 215, S, 315; *Al.*, X.ix.11, L, II, 226, S, 323; *Al.*, X.xi.5-8, L, II, 233-

to suppose that he could manipulate the barbarians' greed and orchestrate services from them. Thus in 1111 envoys were instructed to promise donations to Levantine Frankish magnates, but to exact oaths and specify the tasks to be performed before handing over the money,[49] an echo of Alexios's methods upon the first appearance of the Crusaders before Constantinople.[50] Then, he used to invite leading Crusaders to ask for whatever they wanted, on the assumption that they would opt for 'gold, silver, gems, cloaks and the like',[51] in other words, the carefully husbanded contents of his strong rooms.

Several other features of Byzantine diplomacy of long standing can be discerned in Alexios's dealings with foreigners and foreign peoples. For example, he invited certain potentates to Constantinople and lavished gifts and titles on them. The sultan of Nicaea, Abul Qasim, was invited to the capital 'in order to receive money, and to sample all the City's delights'. Abul Qasim duly went and was treated to baths, hunts and daily chariot-races that were specially laid on; his sightseeing took in 'the commemorative columns standing along the thoroughfares'.[52] In 1100 Raymond of Toulouse journeyed to Constantinople, apparently on his own initiative, and was 'magnificently received by the emperor [and] courteously

234, S, 328-329; *Al.*, XI.iii.1, L, III, 16, S, 340; *Al.*, XI.vii.3, L, III, 33, S, 353; *Al.*, XI.viii.5, L, III, 38-39, S, 357; *Al.*, XIII.iv.7, L, III, 102-103, S, 407; *Al.*, XIV.ii.6-7, L, 148-149, S, 440-441; *Al.* XIV.ii.14, L, III, 154, S, 444 (Crusaders and other westerners).

[49] *Al.*, XIV.ii.7, L, III, 149-150, S, 441; R.-J. Lilie, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten* (Munich, 1981), 77.

[50] F.L. Ganshof, 'Recherche sur le lien juridique qui unissait les chefs de la première Croisade à l'empereur byzantin', *Mélanges offerts à Paul-Edmond Martin* (Geneva, 1961), 62. But judging by Anna's syntax, Hugh of Vermandois was given 'ample sums of money' before swearing an oath of fealty, rather than exclusively afterwards: *Al.*, X.vii.5, L, II, 215.2-3, S, 315. Below, 105.

[51] Ralph of Caen, *Gesta Tancredi*, ch. 18, *RHO*, III, 619. Ralph's account is slanted to display its hero, Tancred, as impervious to material temptations. It is nonetheless valuable evidence of how a near-contemporary Latin writer appraised Alexios's assumptions about the Crusaders: that their motivation and aspirations were materialistic.

[52] *Al.*, VI.x.8-10, L, II, 70-71, S, 204.

treated'. Eventually, after a two-year stay in the Byzantine ambit, he was sent back to his wife and family in Syria 'with huge gifts and ... abundant largesse'.[53] The precise manner in which potentates were received by the emperor continued to be of keenest concern to them, judging by the detailed procedure which Bohemond tried to stipulate for his encounter with Alexios in 1108.[54] Presumably the general glamour of the imperial entourage as well as the hard cash of the stipends added allure to the court-titles which Anna treats as fundamental to her father's diplomacy.[55] Titles were offered to leading Turks, Normans, Venetians and other westerners, including, probably, participants on the Crusade.[56] Bohemond, after concluding a treaty with Alexios at Dyrrachium in 1108, received the title of *sebastos* 'and plenty of money'.[57] As Anna notes of her father's lavishing of gifts and a title upon a particularly obdurate erstwhile rebel, Gregory Taronites of Trebizond, it was her father's custom to act thus.[58] Alexios maintained another practice of his Macedonian precursors in making play of the conversion of Moslem, pagan or heretical notables. In at least one case, perhaps many more, Alexios was

[53] William of Tyre, *Chronica*, 9,13, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, I (Turnholt, 1986), 437; cf. *ibid.*, 10, 11, ed. Huygens, 436; Ralph, *Gesta Tancredi*, ch. 145, 707-708; *Al.*, XI.viii.1, L, III, 36, S, 355. The stay may well have been protracted by the negotiations between Raymond and Alexios over their respective status in Syria, and also by Alexios's hopes of employing him as an intermediary with the fresh armies passing through Byzantium in 1101: Lilie, *Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 60.

[54] *Al.*, XIII.ix.4, L, III, 118-119, S, 419.

[55] *Al.*, XI.ii.7, L, III, 14.6-8, S, 338. Above, 69.

[56] *Al.*, III.x.1, L, I, 133.4, S, 126 (western potentates in general); *Al.*, III.x.4, L, I, 134.15-16, S, 127 (Germans or Italian subjects of emperor Henry IV); *Al.*, V.vii.4, L, II, 32.10, S, 173 (Normans); *Al.*, VI.v.2, L, II. 51.11, S, 188 (a leading Norman, Guy, son of Robert Guiscard); *Al.*, VI.v.10, L, II, 54.14-17, S, 191 (Venetians); *Al.*, VI.x.10, L, II, 71.29, S, 204 (title of *sebastos* for Abul Qasim of Nicaea); *Al.*, VII.viii.7, L, II, 114.9-10, S, 236 (Tzachas (Çaka), the Turk); *Al.*, X.xi.8, L, II, 234.18-19, S, 329 (Crusaders treated to παντοίαις δωρεαῖς καὶ τιμαῖς); *Al.*, XI.ii.5, L, III, 13.1, S, 337; *Al.*, XI.ii.7, L, III, 14.7, S, 338 (Turks); *Al.*, XIII.viii.6, L, III, 116.15-16, S, 417 (one of Bohemond's commanders, deserting in 1108).

[57] *Al.*, XIV.i.1, L, III, 141.14, S, 435.

[58] *Al.*, XII.vii.4, L, III, 77.14-17, S, 388.

personally involved in the baptism ritual.[59] Anna Komnene is sufficiently mindful of the apostolic duties of an emperor to claim that her father wished to convert 'not only these notorious Scythian nomads but also all Persia', and all the Moslems of Egypt and north Africa.[60] It was, however, not unknown for court-titles to be bestowed on Moslems such as Abul Qasim of Nicaea; such titles had been conferred on Moslem border potentates earlier in the eleventh century.[61]

Another imperial custom was that of addressing certain foreign potentates as 'sons'. It was enshrined in the lists of forms of address for foreign rulers in the *De cerimoniis*.[62] The address to the ruler of Bulgaria as 'our beloved and spiritual child' was meaningful in that the Bulgarians had received Christianity from Byzantium and their first Christian khan, Boris, took in baptism the name of the reigning emperor, Michael.[63] Likewise the ruler of Alania's appellation as 'our spiritual child' rested on a specific historical demarche, while Constantine VII's designation of Olga of Kiev as his 'daughter', reported in the *Russian Primary Chronicle*, had a specific basis, in that he had sponsored her baptism, and become her godfather.[64] Alexios Komnenos, for his part, laid claim

[59] Alexios induces an emissary of Malik Shah to accept baptism: *Al.*, VI.ix.4,6, L, II, 66, S, 200-201. For baptisms of other Turks, see *Al.*, VI.xiii.4, L, II, 81.4-5, S, 211; *Al.*, XIII.v.2, L, III, 105.12-13, S, 409; Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, *Théophylacte*, I, 226-229.

[60] *Al.*, VI.xiii.4, L, II, 81.15-18, S, 211-212.

[61] *Al.*, VI.x.10, L, III, 71.29, S, 204; W. Felix, *Byzanz und die islamische Welt* (Vienna, 1981), 96, 100, 113-114, 121.

[62] Constantine VII, *De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae*, II, 48, ed. J.J. Reiske, I (CHSB, Bonn, 1829), 687 (king of kings of Armenia); 688 (ruler of Alania); 690 (*archon* of the Bulgarians and *basileus* of Bulgaria).

[63] F. Dölger, 'Der Bulgarenherrscher als geistlicher Sohn des byzantinischen Kaisers', repr. *Byzanz und die europäische Staatenwelt* (Darmstadt, 1976), 190-193 and nn.17-20; *idem* 'Die "Familie der Könige" im Mittelalter' *ibid.*, 41; D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine commonwealth* (London, 1974), 118.

[64] *Povest' Vremennykh Let* s.a.955, ed. D.S. Likhachev and V.P. Adrianova-Peretts, I (Moscow-Leningrad, 1950), 44; *Russian Primary Chronicle*, tr. S.H. Cross and O.P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), 82; G.G. Litavrin, 'Russko-vizantiyskie svyazi v seredine X veka', *Voprosy Istorii*, 1986, no. 6, 51-52.

to the status of a father on certain occasions. He professed fatherly solicitude for the participants on the First Crusade in general,[65] and he specifically proposed to adopt as his sons the more important leaders. Godfrey of Bouillon and the other leaders underwent a ceremonial form of adoption, while a writer who passed through Constantinople in 1101 supposed Alexios's designation of foreign notables as his 'sons' to be 'his custom'.[66] Alexios also resorted to the taking of hostages. He is attested as taking them from nomadic peoples, Pechenegs and Cumans, and also from Balkan Slav potentates.[67] Evidence that he took hostages from westerners for substantial lengths of time is less clear-cut, but he undoubtedly encouraged notables to send their young sons to reside at his court.[68] This practice, which seems to have been current through early and middle Byzantine history, could be expected to constrain the fa-

[65] Ep. 11, ed. Hagenmeyer, 153 (letter to abbot Oderisius of Monte Cassino). Below, 122.

[66] Albert of Aix, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, *RHO*, IV (II, 16, 310-311) claims that 'all' the other leaders, besides Godfrey, became Alexios's sons as well as his vassals, and regards imperial adoption of eminent foreigners as 'the custom of the land'. He seems to have been writing independently of Ekkehard of Aura, the contemporary writer who took adoption by the emperor to be 'his custom': *Frut.-Ek.*, 166-167. According to Raymond d'Aguilers, Alexios's letters to count Raymond of Toulouse were already mooting 'brotherhood and, so to say, sonship (*filiatione*)' while his contingent was crossing the Balkans: Raymond, *Liber*, 38, tr. Hill, 18; see also Ralph, *Gesta Tancredi*, chs. 9, 11, 611, 612. Stephen of Blois seems to have regarded Alexios 'quasi...pater' after staying with him for ten days, and also supposed that the rank-and-file 'venerated' him as 'their pious father': ep. 4, ed. Hagenmeyer, 139, 140. See, on Alexios's presentation of himself as 'father', Ganshof, 'Recherche', 57-58. On the ceremony of adoption and its connotations: E. Patlagean, 'Christianisation et parentés rituelles: le domaine de Byzance', *Annales ESC*, 3(1978), 627; R. Macrides, 'Kinship by arrangement: the case of adoption', *DOP*, 44 (1990), 110-114.

[67] *Al.*, VII.vi.2, L, II, 106.3, S, 230 (Pechenegs); *Al.*, VIII.iv.3, L, II, 136.30-137.1, S, 254 (Cumans); *Al.*, IX.iv.4, L, II, 167-168, S, 276-277; *Al.*, IX.x.1, L, II, 184.17-26, S, 289-290; *Al.*, XII.iv.4, L, III, 66.6-7, S, 379 (Bolkan, or Vukan, *upan* of Rascia).

[68] According to Stephen of Blois, Alexios 'very frequently urged and urges' him to send one of his sons to his court, promising lavish gifts and an 'honour', presumably a court-title, for him: ep. 4, ed. Hagenmeyer, 138.

ther's actions, while instilling a taste for imperial court culture in his young son.

Besides this medley of diplomatic devices, Alexios's general means of dealing with foreign peoples or groupings call to mind certain textbook axioms of Byzantine diplomacy, notably the *De administrando*.[69] Repeatedly, we find Alexios endeavouring to 'divide and rule'. Thus when he faced an invasion by the Normans from southern Italy, he tried to incite other potentates of the peninsula against them, and paid special attention to emperor Henry IV of Germany, 'knowing that the king of Germany was more powerful than all of them, and that he could accomplish whatever he wanted against Robert'.[70] Alexios's efforts to divert the Normans through a German intervention into southern Italy would have been appreciated by Constantine Porphyrogennetos. In the event, Henry's appearance before Rome and menacing of Gregory VII does seem to have obliged Guiscard to return with part of his forces to Italy in 1082; although (or perhaps because) Henry did not actually invade Apulia, he continued to receive embassies from Alexios.[71] Alexios also continued the methods of his immediate predecessors in fomenting insurrections among the Norman warlords, including members of the Hauteville family, in southern Italy.[72]

'Divide and rule' was also applied by Alexios to his dealings with the Turks, whose political structures in Asia Minor were even more recently established than those of the Normans in southern Italy. In both theatres, Alexios had merely to exploit dissensions

[69] Constantine VII, *DAI*, chs. 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, ed. Moravcsik and Jenkins, 48-53, 56-57, 62-65.

[70] *Al.*, III.x.2, L, I, 133.7-9, S, 126.

[71] In 1083, according to Frutolf: *Frut.-Ek.*, 96-97; Bernold of St Blaise (*Chronicon*, 440) mentions an embassy s.a. 1084, but may here be alluding to the one originally sent to incite Henry against Guiscard. See Chalandon, *Essai*, 68-69 and n.4 on 69, 81, 84-85; *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile*, I (Paris, 1907), 267, 271-272; T.C. Lounghis, 'The failure of the Germano-Byzantine alliance on the eve of the First Crusade', *XV Int. Cong.*, IV (Athens, 1980), 201-202, 204.

[72] Chalandon, *Domination normande*, I, 258, 267, 273; W.B. McQueen, 'Relations between the Normans and Byzantium, 1071-1112', *B*, 56 (1986), 434-435, 443-444, 447.

which sprang up of their own accord. He was, judging by his daughter's account, well-aware of the Turks' internal rivalries, which were exacerbated by the death in battle of Sulayman ibn Qutlumush, the self-styled 'sultan' based in Nicaea, in 1086. Sulayman's erstwhile subordinates set themselves up in the towns which they had formerly overseen on his behalf,[73] and were thus liable to be picked off one by one, by Alexios or Malik Shah, the Seljuk sultan based in Baghdad. Alexios lost no time in putting military pressure on Nicaea, partly to probe its defences and partly to induce its new ruler to come to terms. Abul Qasim, a kinsman of Sulayman, duly concluded a peace-treaty with Alexios,[74] and subsequently received aid against the armies of Malik Shah. However, Anna emphasises that Alexios was not seeking to assist Abul Qasim so much as to destroy him: 'for when two enemies of the Roman empire were fighting one another, it was necessary to support the weaker one'; once the stronger party had been repulsed, the weaker one could be dispossessed of his city.[75] On another occasion Alexios succeeded in implanting suspicion in sultan Kilij Arslan concerning the ambitions of Tzachas (Çaka), the *amir* of Smyrna, and, according to Anna, he conducted in effect joint-operations with Kilij Arslan against Tzachas. Tzachas eventually met his end at the hands of the sultan and this was, according to Anna, the consequence of Alexios's wiles.[76]

The starkest example of Alexios's application of 'divide and rule' concerns, appropriately, the steppe-nomads, the principal object of Constantine VII's injunctions. After several years of campaigning against the Pechenegs, often disastrously, Alexios formed an alliance with another steppe people, the Cumans, whom he had almost certainly summoned.[77] Anna stresses her

[73] *Al.*, VI.x.1, L, II, 67.1-4, S, 201.

[74] *Al.*, VI.x.8, L, II, 70, S, 203. Above, 78.

[75] *Al.*, VI.xi.1-2, L, II, 72-73, S, 205; *Al.*, VI.xi.4, L, II, 74, S, 206; Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, 80; A.G.K. Savvides, *Τὸ Βυζάντιο καὶ οἱ Σελτζοῦκοι Τοῦρκοι τὸν ἐνδέκατο αἰῶνα* (Athens, 1988), 58, 64.

[76] *Al.*, IX.iii.3-4, L, II, 165-166, S, 274-275; Savvides, *Βυζάντιο καὶ οἱ Σελτζοῦκοι*, 67.

[77] Although Anna makes no explicit mention of a summons, it is hard to believe that the Cumans' appearance so far south was unsolicited. In fact,

father's constant fear that the Cumans would come to an 'accord' (σύμβασιν) with the Pechenegs and turn against him. Thus during the battle he noticed that some Pechenegs were surrendering to the Cumans in hopes of clemency, and he feared that 'feelings as well as bridles might change direction', and that the nomads might unite against him.[78] He is said to have averted this by positioning his imperial standard among the Cumans, and the battle of Lebounion proved to be a decisive victory. But although the Pechenegs ceased to be a significant politico-military force in 1091, they were not physically annihilated, as Anna makes out.[79] Six years later, sizeable units of Pechenegs were posted along the routes traversed by the armies of western 'pilgrims' who professed Jerusalem as their goal. Latin sources hostile to Alexios complain of the sometimes deadly molestation which the Crusaders suffered at the hands of the Pechenegs, Cumans and 'Tourkopouloi' employed by the emperor.[80] Alexios probably did not give specific orders for unprovoked assaults, as these sources allege. But he must have reckoned that the teeming bands of westerners could most effectively be confined to the main thoroughfares by 'rough diamonds'. Of course, these Pechenegs and Tourkopouloi cannot properly be regarded as discrete peoples who were being manipulated into military action by Alexios's diplomacy: Turkish warriors had helped Alexios seize and secure the throne in 1081, and other bands of Turks had performed the same role for his predecessor.[81] Even so, Alexios's deployment of substantial numbers of Pechenegs—only recently vanquished—

judging by Anna's account, Alexios seems to have assumed that they were 'allies', albeit highly unreliable ones: *Al.*, VIII.iv.2, L, II, 136.20-21, S, 253-254.

[78] *Al.*, VIII.v.2, L, II, 140, S, 256; *Al.*, VIII.v.6, L, II, 142.13-14, S, 258.

[79] *Al.*, VIII.v.9, L, II, 144.1-3, S, 260; *Al.*, VIII.vi.2, L, II, 144.24-25, S, 260.

[80] *Gesta Francorum*, I, 3, 4, ed. tr. R. Hill (London, 1962), 6, 9; Raymond, *Liber*, 38, 39-41; tr. Hill, 19, 21-23; Albert, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, I, 8, 10, 278, 279; VIII, 35, 579. The same complaints are voiced by Ekkehard of Aura, on the strength of his experiences during the Crusade of 1101: *Frut.-Ek.*, 164-165; below, 128.

[81] *Al.*, II.vi.8-9, L, I, 83-84, S, 89; *Al.*, IV.ii.1, L, I, 146, S, 137; Michael Attaleiates, *Ἱστορία*, ed. I. Bekker (CSHB, Bonn, 1853), 263-267. See C.M. Brand, 'The Turkish element in Byzantium, eleventh-twelfth centuries', *DOP*, 43 (1989), 12-13.

and Tourkopouloi to stalk the numerous groups of westerners[82] is a measure of his confidence that he could maneuvre one group of 'barbarians' against another, without serious risk of things getting out of hand. Pechenegs were being used as a 'stick' to intimidate the Crusaders at the same time as 'carrots' in the form of messengers and letters proposing peace, 'brotherhood and ... sonship' and gifts.[83]

Neither Alexios's confidence nor his dexterity deserted him when he beheld 'the massed movement hither from the west' at Constantinople.[84] Anna probably relays her father's observations when she writes of the fiercely competitive nature of the Latin Christians,[85] and the Latin sources corroborate her description of his technique in dealing with leading Crusaders. One by one, they were inveigled into swearing an oath of fealty and into performance of homage; 'the more reasonable' of the leaders—who had already sworn—acted as intermediaries, urging the 'more recalcitrant' to comply.[86] Bohemond even threatened Raymond of Tou-

[82] The diversity of routes and multiplicity of groups of westerners suggests that the nomad monitors were numerous, as do circumstantial details: the Pechenegs and Tourkopouloi were prepared to engage even the largest and best-equipped contingents such as those of Raymond of Toulouse (especially, but not exclusively during his absence: Raymond, *Liber*, 38, 39-41; tr. Hill, 19, 21-23) and Godfrey of Bouillon: Albert, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, II, 6, 303 (Alexios's *intolerabilis virtus militiae*); II, 13, 12, 308, 307: 'an infinite number of Tourkopouloi and warriors of every race' emerged from Constantinople to attack Baldwin's detachment; five hundred Tourkopouloi had picked off Godfrey's men as they foraged, shortly before this episode.

[83] Raymond, *Liber*, 38; tr. Hill, 18; Ralph, *Gesta Tancredi*, chs. 9, 11, 611, 612; Albert, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, II, 11, 307; William, *Chronica*, 2, 14, 18, 178-179, 185; Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 1193, 1197. Above, n.66.

[84] Above, 71-72. Alexios had, in fact, triggered off this 'massed movement': J. Shepard, 'Some aspects of Byzantine attitudes and policy towards the west in the tenth and eleventh centuries', *Byzantium and the west*, ed. J.D. Howard-Johnston (Amsterdam, 1988), 105.

[85] *Al.*, X.v.10, L, II, 209.20-21, S, 311.

[86] *Al.*, X.x.5, L, II, 228.28-29, S, 325; cf. *Al.*, X.ix.3, L, II, 221.16-17, S, 319; *Al.*, X.ix.10, L, II, 225.18-21, S, 322. Latin sources also attest that Crusade leaders who had taken the oath of fealty urged later arrivals to do likewise: Raymond, *Liber*, 40; tr. Hill, 22. A suggestive, albeit fictitious, portrayal of Godfrey and

louse when he refused to take the same oath as the other leaders or to perform homage.[87] Alexios tried to turn the 'massed movement' to his advantage on a more general plane. Thus while he could claim lordship over the Crusading leaders and although he most probably expressly directed them to recapture Nicaea and hand it over 'in accordance with their oaths',[88] he actually utilized the Crusaders' assault as a means of intimidating the defenders into making over the city to the Byzantines. Anna relates with gusto the double-dealing of her father. Ostensibly, he was giving military assistance to the Crusaders, in the form of troops and siege-engines, but in fact he reckoned on negotiating with the Turks. Acting upon Alexios's instructions, Manuel Boutoumites used the westerners as bogeymen, persuading the Turkish commanders 'through a ceaseless stream of letters' to make a secret, separate, surrender to him. Upon their eventual assent he staged a charade, whereby a Byzantine detachment went through the motions of capturing the city. The Turks had been warned that they would be massacred if they fell into the hands of the westerners, and they were offered gifts as well as an amnesty.[89] Thus here, too, a 'carrot' was offered even as the 'stick', in the form of the Crusaders, loomed.

Anna claims that her father mounted this charade from a desire to demonstrate his capacity for feats of arms and to take Nicaea for himself, rather than receiving it from the Crusaders.[90] But we are also told that Boutoumites suspected that the Crusaders might seize the city for themselves once they got inside, and he took care

other leaders urging Bohemond to swear, at Alexios's behest, is supplied by Albert, *Historia Hierosolymitana* II, 18, 312.

[87] *Gesta Francorum*, II, 6, tr. Hill, 13; Raymond, *Liber*, 42, tr. Hill, 24. On the special role which Alexios seems to have envisaged for Bohemond, see J. Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek: Alexius I Comnenus and Bohemond in 1097-98', *BMGS*, 12 (1988), 205-217.

[88] *Al.*, X.xi.10, L, II, 236.2-3, S, 330. The deployment of forces around Nicaea had been predetermined at Constantinople, presumably under Alexios's auspices, judging by Anna's statement that 'the area allotted to Saint-Gilles' (Raymond of Toulouse) was left vacant by the Crusaders at Nicaea, in anticipation of his arrival: *Al.*, XI.i.1, L, III, 7.15-16, S, 333.

[89] *Al.*, X.xi.10, L, II, 236.3-10, S, 331; *Al.*, XI.i.2-6, L, III, 8-13, S, 333-338.

[90] *Al.*, X.xi.10, L, II, 235.30-236.3, S, 330.

to keep the gates closed to them.[91] Boutoumites's apprehensions reflect those of his master and they account for Alexios's preference for a pact with the Nicaean Turks:[92] he felt more at home playing on the fears of one people about another, and his overtures towards Nicaea's defenders were perhaps not far-removed in calculation from his approach to the Turkish *amirs* ensconced in the cities of western Asia Minor. Alexios seems to have lost no time in sending there John Doukas together with a sizeable fleet and land force. Doukas was instructed 'to proclaim everywhere the capture of Nicaea' and to display to doubters the daughter of Tzachas, the former *amir* of Smyrna. She had been married to Kilij Arslan, the sultan of Nicaea, and had been taken prisoner in the city. She was thus, we are told, intended to serve as living proof that Nicaea had fallen.[93] Anna depicts the defenders of Smyrna as giving up on the arrival of the amphibious forces under Doukas, while several other important towns apparently fell very easily: only at Ephesos and Polybotos does there seem to have been stiff resistance.[94] The precise chronology or character of this campaign cannot be reconstructed from the *Alexiad*, but it most probably began in the summer of 1097.[95] The despatch of Tzachas's daugh-

[91] *Al.*, XI.ii.7, L, III, 13.24-27, S, 338.

[92] Anna makes clear that Boutoumites was, from the outset, provided with 'written guarantees' and a chrysobull in an attempt to win over Nicaea's defenders: *Al.*, XI.i.2, L, III, 8.7, S, 334; *Al.*, XI.ii.5, L, III, 12.30-33, S, 337. Cf. J. France, 'Anna Comnena, the *Alexiad* and the First Crusade', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 10 (1984), 26.

[93] *Al.*, XI.v.2, L, III, 24.11-19, S, 346; Savvides, *Βυζάντιο καὶ οἱ Σελτζοῦκοι*, 73.

[94] *Al.*, XI.v.5-6, L, III, 26-27, S, 347-348.

[95] A summer date can be deduced from the important role assigned to the fleet. To assume its ability closely to liaise with the land forces under Doukas at any other season would have been uncharacteristically rash of Alexios. Moreover, the two forces seem to have approached Smyrna—the sea voyage's end—simultaneously: *Al.*, XI.v.3, L, III, 24.32-25.5, S, 346. Doukas, liaising with the fleet, would presumably have needed to oblige a number of 'the coastal towns' (*Al.*, XI.v.2, L, III, 24.10-11, S, 346) to surrender *en route*, and it is highly unlikely that this operation, the occupation of Smyrna and the subsequent campaigning could all have been carried out in the early spring of 1098, in time for Alexios to advance from Constantinople as far as Philomelion in June. Therefore Doukas must have begun his campaign in the

ter with the expedition to leave the Smyrniote Turks in no doubt as to Nicaea's fall would suggest that the expedition was launched soon after that event. But perhaps it was not the sight of Doukas's forces or the news about Nicaea so much as the possibility of the Latins's assault that the Turks feared and Alexios exploited. The appearance of Tzachas's daughter would have demonstrated that clemency was to be had from the Byzantines,[96] whereas the strange masses fighting their way through the interior of Asia Minor were, in every sense, an unknown quantity: the Turks would not have known that their course was set for Antioch and Jerusalem; for all the Turks knew, they were executing an elaborate pincer-movement in liaison with Doukas's forces. In other words, the opening phase, at least, of Doukas's campaign may well have owed its swift and fairly bloodless progress to the use of the Crusaders as bogeymen. Not for nothing, I suggest, were these armed hordes led by their Byzantine guides southwards through western Asia Minor heading somewhat west of Polybotos (Bolvadin) and down as far as Antioch-in-Pisidia (Yalvaç). This was a locality some two hundred miles due east of Smyrna, the most important Turkish stronghold on the coast and, probably, Doukas's main target in the campaigning season of 1097.[97]

previous year, perhaps late July or August: Nicaea fell on 19 June 1097 and some weeks would have been needed for fitting out the fleet (which Anna depicts as substantial), even if the vessels were mostly transports that had recently been used for ferrying the Crusaders across the Bosporos. Cf. S. Runciman, *A history of the Crusades*, I (repr. Harmondsworth, 1965), 194.

[96] This may have been her principal role in accompanying the expedition. Anna herself states that the Turks in Smyrna had already heard of Nicaea's fall, by the time John Doukas arrived (*Al.*, XI.v.3, L, III, 25.5-6, S, 346). That the sensational news about Nicaea would travel fast was to be expected—by Alexios, among others.

[97] The Crusaders, guided by Tatikios and his men, reached Antioch-in-Pisidia at a time which has been estimated as 'towards 31 July', and proceeded to camp there for a few days: H. Hagenmeyer, *Chronologie de la première croisade* (Paris, 1902), 89-90. For the route of the main body of the Crusaders, see Runciman, *History of the Crusades*, I, 183-184, 188-190, map on 176. See also, for Polybotos and Antioch-in-Pisidia, W.M. Ramsay, *The historical geography of*

In short, Alexios did not merely react with alacrity and organizational skill to the appearance of huge numbers of knights and simple folk on his borders.[98] He seized the opportunity to recover Nicaea and the other Turkish power centre which had exercised him greatly in past years, Smyrna, the former seat of Tzachas.[99]

Asia Minor (London, 1890), 47, 140, map before 197; K. Belke, *Galatien und Lykaonien*, (*TIB* 4, Vienna, 1984), 78-79 (Crusaders' route).

[98] Alexios's emissaries at Piacenza in March 1095 may well have urged 'the lord pope and all the faithful of Christ' to contribute 'some aid to him against the pagans' (Bernold of St Blaise, *Chronicon* s.a. 1095, 462), especially if, as is likely, they were despatched at a time when Alexios faced a major Cuman invasion in the Balkans: Gautier, 'Synode des Blachernes', 283. Above, n.34. Even so the medley of war-bands and penniless pilgrims making for the east cannot but have bemused him: P. Charanis, 'Byzantium, the west and the origin of the First Crusade', *B*, 19 (1949), 32-36, repr. *Social, economic and political life in the Byzantine empire* (London, 1973), XIV; C. Cahen, 'An introduction to the First Crusade', *P&P*, 6 (1954), 19, 24-25, repr. *Turcobyzantina et Oriens Christiana*, B (London, 1974), B. de Waha, 'Lettre d'Alexis Comnène', 119-120; Shepard, 'Byzantine attitudes and policy', 104-105, 116.

[99] Anna makes out that Tzachas was still alive in 1097-8, harrassing Alexios (*Al.*, XI.v.1, L, III, 23-24, S, 345-346), and that he was at Smyrna at the time of Doukas's attack, negotiating its surrender: *Al.*, XI.v. 2-3, ed., Leib, III, 24-25, S, 347. However, the latter reference reads awkwardly, jarring with Anna's reference 'to the men of Smyrna' who proposed surrender, and offering no information as to the subsequent fate of this notorious foe of her father. Above all, Anna's indication that Tzachas was still alive in 1097 flatly contradicts her earlier statement that he was put to death by Kilij Arslan, an occurrence which would have to be placed several years earlier: *Al.*, IX.iii.4, L, II, 166.15, S, 275; above, 83. This earlier statement, which is detailed and coherent, appears the more trustworthy of Anna's two accounts. Anna, or her informant, might have named Tzachas in the context of 1097 to magnify the Turkish pirate menace and thus justify Alexios's decision to commit substantial forces to regaining ground in western Asia Minor, rather than himself going to help the Crusaders. This, she claims, Alexios was 'very eager' to do: *Al.*, XI.v.1, L, III, 23.19-20, S, 345. Alternatively, Anna may have confused Tzachas with his son, who could have been homonymous. An alternative chronology of Tzachas's later career and end is proposed by A.G.K. Savvides, 'ὁ Σελτζοῦκος ἔμιρης τῆς Σμύρνης Τζαχᾶς (Çaka) καὶ οἱ ἐπιδρομές του στα μικρασιατικὰ παράλια, τὰ νησιὰ τοῦ ἀνατολικοῦ Αἰγαίου καὶ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπόλη: II', *Χιακὰ Χρονικά*, 16 (1984), 60-65. See, however, Brand, 'Turkish element', 3, n.8.

'Carrot' and 'stick' had been wielded by Alexios to great effect. Tourkopouloi and Pechenegs had been deployed to intimidate the crowds of westerners, and subsequently these westerners had themselves been steered in such a way as to terrify and demoralize the Turks.

These *aperçus* of Alexios's techniques offer answers to some of the questions raised earlier. Alexios, although necessarily vigilant for surprise attacks, clearly did have the long-term goal of regaining hegemony over former Byzantine possessions, above all strongholds, as Anna fleetingly—and rather erratically—recognizes.[100] Alexios had an order of priorities, relegating, for example, the insurgent Balkan dualists to 'marginal status'.[101] After dealing with Robert Guiscard, the only one of his enemies to be mounting a sustained attack on Constantinople itself, he could attend to uprisings and nomads' invasions in the Balkans, and then to the Turks.[102] Alexios counted on the divisions between the Turkish leaders, and Anna quotes a letter of the sultan, Malik Shah, which actually proposes a marriage-alliance and the cession of Abul Qasim's emirate and the rest of Anatolia to Alexios.[103] Alexios responded to the sultan in a civil but non-committal fashion: on the whole, he preferred to rely on his own endeavours, initially bolstering the weaker western emirates 'in order that he might little by little take back one [city] after another and extend Roman rule'.[104] In other words, Alexios had a policy of *reconquista* which he sought to realize through military pressure and diplomacy. This may seem to us obvious, but it serves as a corrective to

[100] Anna claims that Alexios extended his borders to the Euphrates and Tigris: *Al.*, VI.xi.3, L, II, 73.27, S, 206.

[101] *Al.*, VI.v.1, L, II, 50.3-4, S, 188. Later, we are told, upon the onset of the Crusaders, Alexios 'gave everything else secondary status': *Al.*, XIV.iv.3, L, III, 160.29-161.1, S, 449.

[102] *Al.*, VI.ix.1, L, II, 63, S, 198. Cf. Chalandon, *Essai*, 95 ff.

[103] *Al.*, VI.xii.1, L, II, 74-75, S, 207. A convincing case for identifying Malik Shah as the sultan and dating the letter to 1086 or 1087 was made by Gautier, *Théophylacte*, I, 81. The later date of 1092 was favoured by Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, 80.

[104] *Al.*, VI.xi.2, L, II, 73.7-8, S, 207. Anna depicts Alexios as at one point trying to bribe Abul Qasim's brother to hand over Nicaea in Abul Qasim's absence: *Al.*, VI.xii.8, L, II, 78.19-21, S, 209. Above, 78.

Anna's claim that Alexios concentrated on 'wars against the barbarians' and left 'the entire administration of affairs' to his mother.[105] It also tempers the general impression conveyed by Anna and the *Mousai* that Alexios's position was 'reactive', responding to 'wave upon wave of troubles'. No doubt this was how things seemed to him near the end of his life, when he was racked by bouts of excruciating rheumatism.[106] Alexios's melancholy at the time of composing the *Mousai*[107] should not blind us to his successes with Nicaea and the reduction of the emirates of western Asia Minor. It was his misfortune if also his miscalculation that the bogeymen whose passage through Asia Minor brought these objectives within his grasp returned to haunt him. For no sooner had he attained longstanding policy objectives vis-à-vis the Turks than he found himself being humiliatingly defied by a vocal section of the Latins at Antioch.[108] It may have been this irony that laced his later years with bitterness.

New or old?

There remains the question of continuity. As we have seen, many of Alexios's techniques are recognizable as devices of long standing. In his hand-outs of money and titles, in his assumption that he could orchestrate the movements of barbarian hosts and in his frequent recourse to 'divide and rule' and 'carrot and stick', Alexios ranks as a true disciple of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos. Yet there are significant contrasts between Alexios and previous emperors in their modes of dealing with foreigners. In part they stem from the plight of the empire upon Alexios's accession and the mixture of warfare and diplomacy with which he tried to alleviate it. If Alexios practised various forms of 'divide and rule', it was in order to recover recently-lost tracts of territory, rather than to maintain the status quo or to expand. And, as our glance at Alexios's techniques suggests, much of this 'diplomacy' consists of

[105] *Al.*, III.vii.1, L, I, 123.9-14, S, 119. Above, 76; Gautier, *Théophylacte*, I, 92.

[106] *Al.*, XIV.iv.2, L, III, 160.11-13, S, 449; *Al.*, XIV.iv.8, L, III, 163.15-25, S, 451.

[107] Anna says that she once heard him reprove her mother for trying to commission a full history of his reign: 'it would be better, he said, to lament for him and deplore his miseries': *Al.*, XV.xi.1, L, III, 230.7-11, S, 505-506.

[108] Below, 128.

tactical manoeuvres applied by Alexios himself in the course of, or in liaison with, military campaigning.

In large part this follows from the fact that Alexios was more or less continuously on campaign for the first fifteen years of his reign, and although the First Crusade marks an abrupt hiatus in his career as a field-commander, he was still capable of leading his forces from the front in the later years of his reign.[109] Alexios was therefore absent from Constantinople for prolonged periods, unlike most of his predecessors, who, in Anna's words, did not 'even dare to set foot at all in Asia'.[110] From his earliest years, as a youthful military commander, Alexios prided himself on his quick thinking; resourcefulness in an apparently hopeless military situation is a quality in her father which Anna highlights.[111] If the manoeuvring of the Cumans against the Pechenegs was in one sense a feat of steppe diplomacy, it was executed by Alexios himself. He relied less on intermediaries and less on palace ceremonial as the setting for his diplomacy, and in practice he treated many foreign notables as near equals and companions in everyday intercourse. If it is not absolutely clear from Anna whether the Cuman leaders banqueted in his presence on two occasions during his final campaign against the Pechenegs,[112] it is clear that he personally cajoled them, as he had done with Pecheneg envoys a few years earlier.[113] This is a far cry from Constantine VII's court, where princess Olga of Kiev was deemed worthy only of dessert with the emperor and where the emperor's throne rose to the ceiling beyond polite speaking distance from an envoy: at his initial audience, the envoy conversed merely with the logothete of the

[109] Alexios campaigned against Bohemond in 1107-1108 and, on several occasions thereafter, led his forces against the Turks: Chalandon, *Essai*, 265-266, 268-271.

[110] *Al.*, XV.x.5, L, III, 229.25-27, S, 505.

[111] See, e.g., *Al.*, I.v.1, L, I, 19.26-29, S, 39; *Al.*, VII.vi.4, L, II, 107.2-4, S, 230; *Al.*, VII.xi.1-2, L, II, 123.15-23, S, 243.

[112] *Al.*, VIII.iv.3, L, II, 136.27-29, S, 254; *Al.*, VIII.vi.4, L, II, 145.27-28, S, 260-261. He is said to have 'feasted' (εἱστία) them lavishly on the second occasion, and Anna gives the strong impression that he was present. Below, n.226.

[113] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, *Théophylacte*, I, 222-225.

drome.[114] Even when a foreign potentate such as Abul Qasim is received in Alexios's Constantinople, the festivities form part of an elaborate ruse to detain him there so that a fortress could be built on a stretch of the coastline under his sway. And anyway, we are told, Alexios 'saw no other way of attaining his goal'.[115] Even in the traditional-seeming sphere of hostages, we find Alexios taking the initiative and offering hostages to Godfrey of Bouillon in 1097. He was even prepared to send his nine-year-old son, the future addressee of the *Mousai*, to him as a hostage.[116] Previously, emperors had kept sons or other kinsmen of foreign notables at their court, rather than proffering their own: porphyrogennetoi were not for loaning.

Of course, this contrast can be be explained by sheer necessity. Fearing encirclement, Alexios had to accord adversaries (real or supposed) marks of favour and personal undertakings which his more secure predecessors could deny them. Being engaged in highly mobile warfare in the earlier years of his reign, he had relatively few opportunities for full-blown receptions of foreign envoys; it must often have been difficult for foreign embassies to find him while he was engaged in mortal combat with the Nor-

[114] Constantine VII, *De cerimoniis*, II, 15, ed. J. Reiske, 2 vols (CFHB, 16-17, Bonn, 1829-1830), 597; cf. 568-569; Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, VI, 5, ed. J. Becker, *MGH in usum scholarum* (Leipzig, 1915), 155; tr. F.A. Wright, *Works* (London, 1930), 207-208.

[115] *Al.*, VI.x.7, L, II, 70.31-32, S, 203. Above, 78.

[116] According to Albert (*Historia Hierosolymitana*, II, 14, 15, 309-310; cf. William, *Chronica*, 2, 11, 174), Godfrey's response to Alexios's initial offer was to ask for his son, John, i.e. the Porphyrogennetos. The boy was sent to Godfrey's camp, while Godfrey and his fellow leaders went to Alexios's court and were ceremonially adopted by him. John was then only nine years old, but was already betrothed to Piroska, the daughter of king Ladislaus of Hungary: K. Barzos, *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, I (Thessalonike, 1984), 204-205. According to a letter written in the name of Bohemond and other leaders at Antioch, Alexios had handed over his nephew and son-in-law as hostages in May 1097: ep. 12, ed. Hagenmeyer, 154; cf. n.12, 301. This son-in-law would have been Nikephoros Bryennios, author of the *History* which Anna Komnene completed. The couple had been married earlier that year: Barzos, *Γενεαλογία Κομνηνῶν*, I, 179-180; Nikephoros Bryennios, *Ὕλη ἱστορίας*, ed. P. Gautier, *Nicephori Bryennii historiarum libri quattuor* (CFHB, 9, Brussels, 1975), Introduction, 24.

mans or the steppe-nomads. Anna Komnene emphasizes that, in the teeth of so many crises, her father had to 'become all things to all men and adapt himself as far as possible to circumstances', relying on his native talents as charmer and persuader.[117] This, it may be argued, was a temporary expedient rather than a lasting departure from diplomatic practices. Alexios may not have been able to field the enormous baggage-train prescribed by Constantine VII for imperial expeditions, but he continued to insist on his pre-eminence, through spectacular displays of wealth such as the giant tent 'with turreted entrance-halls like a city', in which he received Crusade leaders after the capture of Nicaea.[118] On some campaigns, at least, Alexios took a tent capacious enough for a sizeable portion of his officer corps to be drawn up in it before his gilded throne.[119] Seated on such a throne, he could formally receive envoys from the Seljuk sultan and ask them 'the ritual questions' about their master's health and well-being, keeping up traditional appearances with 'soldiers picked from every nation' arrayed before him.[120]

Nonetheless, a new and distinctive stance can be detected behind the trappings of world dominion. Alexios is said to have delivered 'a long discourse' to the forementioned Seljuk envoys and eventually won them round 'with much persuasive skill'. Anna depicts several other scenes in which her father is his own advocate in dealing with foreign notables, for example, Bohemond at Dyrrachium. While Anna praises his eloquence in conventional enough terms, she makes it clear that Alexios was essentially engaging in debate, a two-way argument in which his antagonist

[117] *Al.*, XIV.iv.4, L, III, 161.8-10, S, 450.

[118] On the baggage-train, see Constantine VII, *De cer.*, I, appendix, ed. Reiske, 459-481; Hendy, *Monetary economy*, 304-313. On Alexios's tent, see *Al.*, XI.iii.2, L, III, 17.9-10, S, 340; Ralph, *Gesta Tancredi*, ch.18, 619.

[119] *Al.*, IX.ix.2, L, II, 181, S, 287.

[120] *Al.*, XIV.iii.8, L, III, 158.5-11, S, 447-448. The context, notably the detail that a 'tent' was specially prepared for the envoys, indicates that the reception occurred during a campaign. For the questions put by the logothete of the drome to the envoys of the caliph and other potentates, see Constantine VII, *De cer.*, II, 47, ed. Reiske, 680-686.

remained unmoved by his arguments.[121] That the gist of Anna's version is authentic is suggested by Theophylact of Ochrid. In a formal oration he assigns decisive importance to Alexios's skills in negotiating with Pecheneg envoys. Alexios had been 'fertile in invention, fluent as a speaker, deep-thinking but charming in presentation'.[122] Alexios 'made his words imperial and sublime', but after a while, 'exasperated by the deceitfulness of the barbarian', he changed his tone to reprimand the Pechenegs. But for all his insistence on Alexios's retention of imperial dignity and the moral high ground, Theophylact makes clear that Alexios was engaging in person in horse-trading with the nomads. It is not surprising that Theophylact tried to put the best face on what was really an attempt to avert further Pecheneg assaults after the Byzantine rout at Dristra.[123] More striking is Theophylact's portrayal of Alexios as a brilliant advocate and negotiator: already, on 6 January 1088,[124] he was hailing as an imperial quality skill in treating with barbarians man to man. Theophylact was placing Alexios on a rather more approachable pedestal, according emphasis to his debating skills.

In the *Alexiad* too there are signs that while Alexios maintained his dignity, he did not stand upon it quite so fixedly as his Macedonian predecessors seem to have done. Thus when Bohemond in 1108 demanded that the emperor rise upon his entry into the imperial tent and that he should be dispensed from kneeling or bowing to Alexios, his requests were rejected. It was, however, agreed that Bohemond should be met by some of Alexios's more distant kinsmen and that Alexios should take him by the hand and station him in 'the place of honour' (τῷ ἄνωθεν μέρει τοῦ βασιλικοῦ

[121] *Al.*, XIII.xi.1-2, L, III, 124, S, 423.

[122] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, *Théophylacte*, I, 222-225. Cf. Orderic Vitalis's characterisation (V, 46-47), from a very different perspective: 'wily and smooth-spoken, a prolific and ingenious master of the art of deception'.

[123] Gautier, *Théophylacte*, I, 75-76.

[124] This dating has been established firmly by Gautier, *Théophylacte*, I, 96. Thus the image of a hyperactive emperor was being propounded from the early years of Alexios's régime.

σκίμποδος).[125] Even if Alexios's strategic advantage over Bohemond was not overwhelming, his taking of Bohemond by the hand was a notable gesture of military companionship. In the imperial palace at Constantinople—presumably Blachernai—Alexios allowed foreign notables a marked degree of familiarity. The famous episode when a Crusader leader sat on the emperor's throne shows that there remained, in every sense, a threshold which none but the emperor was supposed to cross; Alexios alone was seated, while the Crusade leaders stood nearby.[126] Anna recounts the incident to illustrate the westerners' impudence and the forebearance of her father, who 'took this without saying a word' and later conversed with the provocative leader, giving him practical advice on methods of fighting the Turks.[127] But the incident also shows how physically close and accessible were the emperor and his throne to foreign notables: it was not Alexios or Byzantine bodyguards who led the boorish Latin by the hand away from the throne, but Baldwin of Boulogne. And judging by the *Alexiad* Alexios subsequently sought to win the Latin's respect by emphasizing his own experience of wars against the Turks. He did not rely solely on imperial dignity and its ceremonial trappings.[128]

Alexios, then, seems to have conducted himself differently from his predecessors in his manner of dealing with foreign notables. Essentially, he favoured the personal touch. He is said to have

[125] *Al.*, XIII.ix.5, L, III, 119.19-25, S, 419. These arrangements were implemented: Alexios 'grasped Bohemond's hand' and 'placed him near the imperial throne': *Al.*, XIII.x.3, L, III, 122.17-20, S, 422. Anna uses σκίμπους in the sense of 'throne'. Presumably Bohemond was permitted to stand on a dais which formed part of the throne.

[126] 'What a peasant!' was the audacious leader's comment upon the fact that the Crusaders were expected to stand while Alexios sat: *Al.*, X.x.6, L, II, 229.20-21, S, 325.

[127] *Al.*, X.x.7, L, II, 230.10-14, S, 326.

[128] Alexios let the son and heir of Kilij Arslan, Shahanshah, ride beside (and not behind) him, when they met to negotiate terms of peace. Anna claims that Alexios would not agree to Shahanshah dismounting and subsequently gave him his hand to help remount, when the Turk insisted on kissing Alexios's foot; then he threw his own cloak round his shoulders: *Al.*, XV.vi.5, L, III, 209.7-13, S, 487-488.

answered even Tancred's outrageous request to be presented with the imperial tent in a semi-jocular manner, although visibly angry.[129] It is characteristic that Alexios met the Crusade leaders face to face and did not rely on envoys to negotiate on his behalf. Nor did he confine his attentions to the most important leaders. Indeed, his willingness to put up with importunate western 'counts' was his daughter's despair. She complains of the huge demands which Keltic petitioners and prattlers made on his time and stamina: even at the end of the day, when Alexios withdrew to his sleeping-quarters, the westerners pursued him, 'putting forward this or that excuse for more talk; he would stand unflaggingly enduring all this verbosity, hemmed in on all sides by the Kelts. One could see them putting their questions and him there on his own, readily answering each of them'.[130] These proceedings, which began at the time of the Crusade, seem to have continued through the later years of Alexios's reign, for Anna blamed them for the pain in the feet which so troubled her father towards the end of his life. Anna provides her own explanation for Alexios's willingness to suffer the westerners' intrusion to the extent of stopping any official who tried to cut short the proceedings: 'knowing the irascible nature of the Franks, he was afraid that a great blaze of outrage might arise from some trivial excuse, and that great harm to the Roman empire might be the result'. He had to put on a show of, in effect, folksiness, becoming 'all things to all men', in order to disarm western notables in their hundreds.[131] Anna thus provides an answer to the question of why

[129] Ralph, *Gesta Tancredi*, ch.18, 619-620. Alexios is supposed by Stephen of Blois to have received with great joy the news that Stephen had stayed behind to guard Nicaea (instead of joining him for the final *levée* after the city's capture)—'as if I had given him a heap of gold': ep. 4, ed. Hagenmeyer, 140.

[130] *Al.*, XIV.iv.6, L, III, 162.5-15, S, 450-451. Ekkehard of Aura remarks upon the daily 'discussions' (*colloquia*) between Alexios and the leaders of the Crusading expedition of 1101: *Frut.-Ek.*, 166-167; below, 128. Such meetings may have taken place even when no major expedition was passing through the Byzantine lands.

[131] It was presumably these efforts which earned Alexios the reputation of being 'affable to warriors'; this filtered eventually into certain Latin works: Orderic, *Hist. aeccl.*, IV, 14; William, *Chronica*, 2, 11, 175.

Alexios adopted this mode of dealing with foreigners: he had made a realistic assessment of the needs of his state.

Anna provides ample material which can be interpreted in support of such an answer. Alexios's actions in 1097-98 can, from Anna's own evidence, be regarded as exercises in 'divide and rule' diplomacy. His show of personal affability was often no more than a mask. Thus he is said to have greeted Bohemond 'with a ready smile', although he knew full well his 'spiteful, malevolent nature'.[132] And as we have seen, Alexios cast himself in traditional terms when he described his handling of the Crusade: the keeper of the citadel, tossing gold to the gaping jaws of the barbarians.[133] Alexios seems to have regarded the outside world as a whole as jealous of Byzantium. His ambition was to pass on 'the envied city' and 'the majesty of the throne',[134] unimpaired to his heir.

Yet whether he was aware of it or not, Alexios was conducting diplomacy from a different vantage-point to that of his Macedonian precursors. His outlook remained essentially that of the resourceful field-commander. From a very early age he shouldered heavy responsibilities as second-in-command to his elder brother, Isaac,[135] and his earliest experience lay in trying to restore order to Asia Minor in the aftermath of Manzikert. It is surely no accident that both Nikephoros Bryennios and Anna Komnene devote considerable attention to Alexios's quashing of the rebellion of Roussel de Bailleul in the mid-1070s.[136] Even a writer with no predisposition in Alexios's favour could relate that he 'skilfully (εὐμηχάνως) overpowered Roussel in the theme of the Armeniakoi and delivered him to the capital'.[137] Alexios was operating against

[132] *Al.*, X.xi.1, L, II, 231.6, S, 326; *Al.*, X.xi.3, L, II, 231.29-30, S, 327.

[133] Above, 71.

[134] *Mousai*, I, 327, 333.

[135] Alexios seems to have been born in 1057: Barzos, *Γενεαλογία Κομνηνῶν*, I, 87.

[136] Bryennios, II.19, ed. Gautier, 182-201; *Al.*, I.ii.1-7, I.iii.1-4, L, I, 11-16, S, 33-37. Much briefer accounts in Attaleiates, ed. Bekker, 199-200; *Ἡ συνέχεια τῆς χρονογραφίας τοῦ Ἰωάννου Σκυλίτζη*, ed. E.T. Tsolakes (Thessalonike, 1968), 161. See J. Hoffmann, *Rudimente von Territorialstaaten im byzantinischen Reich (1071-1210)* (Munich, 1974), 18-20.

[137] Attaleiates, ed. Bekker, 288.

a formidable commander who had just inflicted a crushing defeat on caesar John Doukas at the head of a full-scale Byzantine army. Alexios's forces, in contrast, were modest and consisted to a large extent of Alans,[138] and they were exposed to the attacks of the Turcoman bands which were now at large in Asia Minor. In essence, Alexios ensnared Roussel by a combination of personal negotiation and bribery, or rather, the promise of bribes. Roussel had just made a pact with Toutach, a Turkoman leader. Alexios entertained Toutach's envoy and 'won him over through giving presents and frequent conversations—for if anyone excelled in sweet-talking (ἐν λόγοις ἡδύς) it was he—to such an extent that the barbarian felt the greatest good-will towards him'.[139] Alexios combined charm with a direct appeal to Toutach's self-interest. He sent him a message through the envoy, pointing out that, if he were to seize Roussel at their next meeting, he would 'gain three great advantages from this: a great deal of money, familiarity with the emperor of the Romans from which he will draw great benefits, and thirdly the Turkish sultan will be pleased to be rid of his enemy'.[140] Alexios, lacking the money to pay Toutach, offered him hostages and proceeded to try and raise the required sum from the citizens of Amaseia, where he was based. He is depicted as haranguing the leading citizens first and then, when they proved recalcitrant, inciting the common people against them.[141] The detailed account of Alexios's manoeuvres supplied by Nikephoros Bryennios most probably derives from the great man himself and this is significant. For while the set speeches are probably the invention of Bryennios, the sense of pride and satisfaction with the manipula-

[138] Bryennios's claim that Alexios disposed only of one hundred and fifty Alans very probably understates the number of troops available, as pointed out by Gautier, *Histoire*, 184-185 and n.3; 183, n.7. Nonetheless, Alexios was heavily outnumbered by Roussel's forces, which sufficed to garrison several fortresses as well as to fight a pitched battle.

[139] Bryennios, II.21, ed. Gautier, 186-187; cf. II.29, 298-299.

[140] Bryennios, II.22, ed. Gautier, 188-189.

[141] Bryennios, II.22-23, ed. Gautier, 188-193.

tion probably emanates from Alexios's reminiscences: this was how he wished to be remembered.[142]

The moral of the story is that a formidable foe can be brought to book by the adroit manipulation of other barbarians—even when no money is to hand and Byzantine troops are few or non-existent. Of course to live by one's wits and outmanoeuvre by guile a numerically superior enemy had been a stock-in-trade from the era of emperor Maurice onwards,[143] and Alexios was certainly not the only general in the 1070s personally to recruit foreigners into the emperor's, or his own, service by means of gifts and the promise of titles.[144] Indeed many of his devices are reminiscent of those recommended by Kekaumenos and Kekaumenos, too, urged inventiveness rather than reliance on the stratagems of 'the ancients'.[145] Nonetheless, Alexios does seem to have been outstanding, and original, in his ability to orchestrate straightforward military qualities such as courage and tactical skills[146] with diplomatic ploys. This combination enabled him already in the mid-1070s to set Turks upon Franks and to whisk away the leader of a rapidly forming Norman statelet. *Captatio benevolentiae* was, of course, a well-worn ploy, but seldom, if ever, had it been practised so strenuously by an emperor in person in conjunction with warfare. If Alexios was, for the first half of his reign at least, his own general, he was also his own logothete of the drome.[147] Even when he delegated gift-giving and other dealings with foreigners to his agents, he was concerned that the giving should be carried out in a gracious and emollient manner. Hence his instructions to John Komnenos on the subject.[148]

In essence then Alexios as emperor retained the habits and devices that had served him well as a field-commander. His underlying concept of his imperial prerogatives may have been unremarkable, but his approach towards foreign individuals and potentates was unprecedented in an emperor. Thus he was not averse to sending members of his own family to the Crusaders as hostages, having sent hostages, albeit 'most distinguished persons' rather than relatives,[149] to Toutach some twenty years earlier. And he often took personal charge of the foreign warriors who served with him, attending closely to the manner of their remuneration. He delayed the distribution of pay to his Cuman allies in 1091 until they had sobered up after a day's drinking, and could the better register his largesse.[150] He was a past master as a manipulator of, and collaborator with, foreign warriors, whether as individuals or in groups. Together with the rehabilitated Roussel and in liaison with Rus' ships he campaigned successfully against John Bryennios, the brother of the rebel Nikephoros Bryennios in 1077.[151] Subsequently he led against Nikephoros Bryennios's 'very great empire (*sic*) resting on an immense army, an illustrious general and the revenues of so many lands and towns' a force which consisted to a large extent of Turkish 'allies' (συμμάχους) and

[142] Attaleiates stresses that Michael VII was already enticing the Turks to seize and hand over Roussel before he sent Alexios to deal with him. He thus represents Michael as basically responsible for the Turks' seizure of Roussel and sale of him to Alexios. Whether or not this is the case, our main concern is with Alexios's portrayal of the affair as exemplifying the techniques in which he believed he excelled. See Attaleiates, ed. Bekker, 199-200; Hoffmann, *Territorialstaaten*, 16-17.

[143] Maurice, *Strategikon*, IV.1-4, VII APr, VII B11, VIII, 2, ed. tr. G.T. Dennis and E. Gamillscheg (Vienna, 1981), 192-203, 230-231, 250-251, 278-279.

[144] See, for example, Nikephoros Botaneiates's enlistment and rewarding of Turkish warriors directed against him by Michael VII: Attaleiates, ed. Bekker, 263-267, 276-277; Skyl. Cont., ed. Tsolakes, 176-177, 179.

[145] Kekaumenos, ed. Litavrin, 140-145, 148-153, 166-173. Inventiveness was, however, enjoined in earlier tactical manuals: Litavrin, ibid, 359 n.175.

[146] Attaleiates, ed. Bekker, 289; cf. 199.

[147] The existence of the office of logothete of the drome is attested for the early years of Alexios's reign, but its last prominent and potent incumbent had been Nikephoritzes in the 1070s; its next seems only to appear in the reign of Manuel Komnenos: R. Guilland, 'Les logothètes', *REB*, 29 (1971), 44, 58-60.

[148] Above, 71-72.

[149] *Al.*, I.ii.3, L, I, 12.21, S, 34

[150] *Al.*, VIII.vi.4, L, II, 146.1-5, S, 260-261.

[151] Attaleiates, ed. Bekker, 253-255; Skyl.Cont., ed. Tsolakes, 175.

Normans from southern Italy. It was most probably a similarly heterogeneous force that he led against Nikephoros Basilakes.[152]

This is well-enough known, as is the fact that Alexios continued to rely heavily on foreigners for military service in the 1080s and 1090s.[153] Less attention has been paid to the implications for his conduct of diplomacy. Ever on the alert for possible new foreign recruits, Alexios could almost be said to have regarded 'diplomacy' through the eyes of a recruiting sergeant. In his dealings with Norman 'counts' in the army of Guiscard and Bohemond, he was not only trying to dissolve a hostile force but also to obtain instant trained and equipped recruits for his own forces.[154] He did the same sort of thing in the case of the Pechenegs, after they had been defeated by fellow steppe-nomads acting in liaison with Alexios at Lebounion.[155]

This is in part a reflection of Alexios's shortage of troops, but there are grounds for supposing that he had a positive preference for employing foreigners rather than Byzantine-born warriors. The works of his daughter and son-in-law, in so far as they reflect Alexios's outlook, suggest that he early formed a certain contempt for the lack of military expertise, indiscipline and cowardice of Byzantine soldiery; this seems to have remained the case even though he often tried to raise levies from among his own subjects.[156] He missed few opportunities to acquire recruits from able-bodied foreigners and often did the recruiting himself. For example, those Turkish defenders of Nicaea who chose to enter his

[152] Attaleiates, ed. Bekker, 289-291; Bryennios, IV.4, IV.6-7, IV.11-13, IV.16, IV.18, ed. Gautier, 264-265, 268-271, 274-279, 282-283 (description of Bryennios's 'very great empire'), 284-285; *Al.*, I.iv.4, L, I, 18, S, 39; *Al.*, I.v.2-3, L, I, 20-21, S, 40-41; *Al.*, I.vi.1-6, L, I, 24-26, S, 43-45.

[153] Chalandon, *Essai*, 76-77; A. Hohlweg, *Beiträge zur Verwaltungsgeschichte des oströmischen Reiches unter den Komnenen* (Munich, 1965), 64-74; Angold *Byzantine empire*, 127-128.

[154] *Al.*, VI.vii.4-5, L, II, 32, S, 173; Chalandon, *Domination normande*, I, 281; McQueen, 'The Normans and Byzantium', 444-445, 447.

[155] Above, 84-85.

[156] Bryennios, II.6, ed. Gautier, 150-153; *Al.*, II.ix.2, L, I, 91.5-9, S, 94-95; *Al.*, III.ii.2, L, I, 107.5-9, S, 106; *Al.*, III.ix.1, L, I, 130.20-23, S, 124; *Al.*, VII.iii.10, L, II, 99.18-25, S, 225; *Al.*, VII.viii.6, L, II, 113.11-14, S, 235; *Al.*, VIII.ii.5, L, II, 132.24-133.2; S, 250-251.

hired service (θητεῦσαι) were encouraged to do so 'with a thousand benefits', while those westerners who did not continue towards Jerusalem were hired to garrison Nicaea.[157] These recruits probably formed part of the huge 'hireling army' (*exercitum simul conductitium*), comprising Tourkopouloi, steppe-nomads, Varangians and westerners which Alexios led as far as Philomelion in the following year.[158] The most celebrated instance of Alexios's quest for non-Byzantine soldiers is the arrangement made with count Robert of Flanders in 1089, as a result of which Robert sent about five hundred horsemen as 'allies' (συμμάχους) upon his return to Flanders.[159] Robert was then on pilgrimage: Alexios would seem to have convinced him that the dispatch of horsemen was consonant with—perhaps corroborative of—the purpose of his pilgrimage. It may well have been in response to Alexios's promptings that king Sigurðr of Norway left 'a great many of his men...behind' to enter Alexios's service, after his stay at Constantinople en route homewards from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.[160] Thus the recruiting went on in a variety of locales and at various levels. Individual Norman or Crusading knights could be enlisted during campaigns, but approaches were also made to visiting potentates, and to distant potentates in their own lands such as the pope.[161] Other matters were, of course, dealt with in Alexios's communications with such potentates, but I suggest that under Alexios diplomacy was harnessed to the recruiting of warriors to a markedly higher degree than had been the case in the Macedonian era.

[157] *Al.*, XI.ii.10, L, III, 15-16, S, 339; *Al.*, XI.iii.3, L, III, 17-18, S, 341.

[158] Albert, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, IV, 40, 417. See also below nn. 212, 238.

[159] *Al.*, VII.vi.1, L, II, 105.19-23, S, 229; *Al.*, VII.vii.4, L, II, 109.25-28, S, 232; cf. F.L. Ganshof, 'Robert le Frison et Alexis Comnène', *B*, 31 (1961), 61-62, 65-69. Ten years later Alexios recruited to his service some of the knights who were returning from Jerusalem in the company of count Robert II: Orderic, *Hist. aeccl.*, V, 276-277.

[160] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla: Uphaf Magnus-sona*, ch.13, ed. F. Jónsson (repr. Oslo, 1966), 540; tr. L.M. Hollander (Austin, Texas, 1967), 698; S. Blöndal and B.S. Benedikz, *The Varangians of Byzantium* (Cambridge, 1978), 139-140.

[161] Shepard, 'Byzantine attitudes and policy', 104.

Alexios's military apprenticeship and background go a long way to explaining the distinctive traits of his diplomacy which have been noted above. A sense of the need to maintain personal, albeit keen-eyed, contact with one's men—something which Kekaumenos enjoined upon his readers[162]—remained strong for Alexios the emperor. He was therefore ready to allow warriors, or potential warriors (such as most visiting notables were) to converse with him at length or to enter his private quarters. He is even said to have exchanged a 'kiss of peace' with Godfrey of Bouillon and all the other leading Crusaders, albeit while he was seated and they were on bended knee.[163] All this could be interpreted as the exercise of leadership through manifesting soldierly qualities such as camaraderie. The young Alexios is said to have spurned a mirror which was tendered to him after a battle with the words, 'for a man and a warrior, arms and simplicity and purity of way of life are adornment': looking in a mirror was only for women.[164] And when Alexios wished to face down malcontents in his army, he chose to dress as a soldier rather than as an emperor even though he was seated on a ceremonial throne, in his tent.[165] This notion of leadership from the front coloured Alexios's conduct of diplomacy as it did other aspects of his regime.[166] A predilection for personal encounters characterises his conduct of affairs in general. Thus he proposed a meeting with Paulician warriors, and they seem to have found nothing strange or suspicious in such an encounter.[167] When he wished to justify his appropriation of church treasure, he addressed an assembly of leading churchmen, civilian officials and army officers. Anna presents him as 'publicly

[162] Kekaumenos, *Strategikon*, ed. Litavrin, 144-147, 148-151, 156-159.
[163] Albert, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, II, 16, 310; William, *Chronica*, 2, 11, 175; Above, 97.
[164] Bryennios, II.7, ed. Gautier, 154-155.
[165] *Al.*, IX.ix.2, L, II, 181.25-26, S, 287.
[166] For the exaltation of soldierly virtues in the Komnenian era, see A. Kazhdan, 'The aristocracy and the imperial ideal', *The Byzantine aristocracy, IX-XIII centuries*, ed. M. Angold (BAR Int. Ser., 221, Oxford, 1984), 50-51; A. Kazhdan and A. Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Berkeley, 1985), 106-107, 112-116.
[167] *Al.*, VI.ii.3, L, II, 44.27-29, S, 183.

submitting himself to judgement' and there is no reason to doubt her account of the event.[168] And we have already noted Theophylact's characterisation of Alexios as an imaginative negotiator, 'deep-thinking but charming in presentation', in his dealings with the Pechenegs.[169]

But were these traits a matter of substance or of style? If his notions of the loftiness of imperial power and rights as emperor were unoriginal, he might be expected to have geared his diplomacy to the preservation of imperial power by any available means in desperate circumstances. As we have seen, his *Mousai* generally foreshadow Anna's outlook in their presentation of the world as a hostile place in which greedy barbarians encircle the City. One may nonetheless enquire whether Alexios's particular style did not have some bearing on the nature of his relations with foreigners: could not new 'style' create new 'substance'? For besides often meeting, entertaining and conversing with foreigners, Alexios formed personal ties with many individual adventurers, travellers or knights from hostile armies. These relationships could take specific forms solemnised by ceremonial.

Most prominent among these forms was the 'oath customary among the Latins' which Alexios is recorded as extracting on a number of occasions. There is good reason to think that the leading members of the First Crusade swore an oath of fealty (*fiducia*) to Alexios and that they did homage to him while one of their number, Bohemond, entered into the still more stringent bond of liege-homage.[170] They seem to have sworn a number of undertakings, notably that they would hand over to the emperor such former possessions of the empire as they might obtain. Alexios for his part most probably offered a counter-oath, specifically committing himself to provisioning and sending military help to the Crusaders.[171] So Anna is not strictly accurate in describing the Crusaders'

[168] *Al.*, VI.iii.3, L, II, 47.1-2, S, 185; A.A. Glabinas, *Ἡ ἐπὶ Ἀλεξίου Κομνηνοῦ περὶ ἱερῶν σκευῶν, κειμηλίων καὶ ἁγίων εἰκόνων ἔρις* (Thessalonike, 1972), 87-90.
[169] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, *Théophylacte*, I, 222-225; above, 95.
[170] *Gesta Francorum*, II, 6, 13; Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek', 237-239.
[171] Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek', 234-236.

oath as 'customary',[172] in that there was no exact precedent for these mutual undertakings. Anna also describes as 'customary' the oath sworn to Alexios by count Robert of Flanders in 1089. This oath does not appear to have been reinforced by homage and clearly it did not commit Robert to military service in person: it would seem merely to have been an element in the arrangement whereby Robert agreed to send knights.[173]

Yet vague as is Anna's phraseology, it implies that her father was well-acquainted with oath-taking on the part of Latins, together with their other customs, by the time of the Crusade. He knew 'all the characteristics of the Keltic temperament' and 'always' heard of their greed and readiness to breach their agreements; 'he knew of old the arrogant nature of the Latins'.[174] It seems probable that Alexios received oaths of fealty from the knights whom he employed in the 1070s, but that he was more impressed with the binding power of their oaths than Anna will allow. For were he convinced that the westerners were reckless flouters of agreements,[175] he would scarcely have gone to such lengths to extract oaths of fealty and homage from the Crusaders in 1096-97. It is true that during a battle in 1078 the western cavalrymen serving under Alexios deserted to the cause of the rebel, Nikephoros Bryennios: they 'put their hands in his, as is their national custom, and gave their pledges (πίστεις)', watched by the rest of Bryennios's soldiery in what was clearly a formal ceremony.[176] Alexios observed the scene from a hilltop and he is most probably our ultimate source of information about the incident. But his inference would seem to have been that the westerners normally took these oath-givings seriously and a general should

[172] *Al.*, X.vii.5, L, II, 215.4, S, 315; *Al.*, X.xi.5, L, II, 232.25-26, S, 328.

[173] *Al.*, VII.vi.1, L, II, 105.21-23, S, 229. Ganshof, 'Robert le Frison', 70-71, believes that the oath was given in return for a 'money-fief' (*Soldvertrag*), identifying Alexios's gifts to Robert as such.

[174] *Al.*, X.v.4, L, II, 206.30-207.2, S, 308; *Al.*, X.x.6, L, II, 229.10-11, S, 325.

[175] *Al.*, X.v.4, L, II, 207.1-2, S, 308. Alexios is alleged by Anna to have confided in count Raymond his 'suspicion about the intentions of the Franks', i.e. that they might seize Roman possessions for themselves, in breach of their oath: *Al.*, X.xi.9, L, II, 235.11-12, S, 330.

[176] Bryennios, IV.10, ed. Gautier, 274-275; *Al.*, I.vi.1, L, I, 24.21-22, S, 43.

take care to receive the oath in person. The Franks in Bryennios's service stayed true to him even in defeat, judging by the fact that one of them rescued his brother, John, and rode with John mounted behind him for safety.[177]

Oaths and undertakings were probably received by many generals, both rebels and 'loyalists' to the Constantinopolitan régimes, during the 1070s, and it was not only westerners who swore them. Nikephoros Botaneiates received a 'symbol (ὑπόδειγμα) of good faith (πιστέως)' from the Turcoman chieftains who switched to his cause from that of Michael VII in 1078. Some formal ceremony seems to have taken place, and when Nikephoros Botaneiates entered Nicaea, his Turkish comrades all 'joined their hands to their chests and ... pledged that it would be their delight to work and toil with him'.[178] Alexios, once on the throne, need not have been consciously innovating in taking oaths of one sort or another from individual foreigners, or leaders of groups of foreigners, who entered his service. His predecessor, Botaneiates, may well have done the same in his time. However, this continuation of the practices of a mercenary-commander by an incumbent on the throne placed the relationship between the emperor and foreigners on a more personal footing than the bestowal of court-titles and payment of stipends (ῥόγαι) had done. There was now more ritual attention to the bond between man and man, as against the gracious favour dispensed by a divinely instituted figure or his officials.[179]

If the oaths which Alexios took from foreign warriors have a direct bearing on his diplomacy as emperor, they also represent a general tendency to resort to oaths as a means of regulating relationships in the higher echelons of Byzantine society from the eleventh century onwards.[180] How far this phenomenon reflects

[177] Bryennios, IV.14, ed. Gautier, 278-281.

[178] Attaleiates, ed. Bekker, 265, 266. Likewise a company of Turks swore 'an oath after their own fashion' to fight on Alexios's side in his bid for the throne: *Al.*, II.vi.8, L, I, 83.30-31, S, 89.

[179] See P. Lemerle, '"Roga" et rente d'état aux X-XI siècles', *REB*, 25 (1967), 78-79, repr. *Le monde de Byzance: histoire et institutions*, (London, 1978), XVI.

[180] See, e.g., John Skylitzes, *Σύνοψις Ἱστοριῶν*, ed. Thurn (CFHB, 5, Berlin and New York, 1973), 393-394, 395, 487, 489, 491, 497, 498; Psellos, *Chronographia*,

the increasing importance of bonds between individuals as a way of propounding norms of behaviour, and how far it is merely the barometer of a generation of political upheaval and fast-shifting loyalties cannot be determined here.[181] What can be noted is the addition of one other form of bonding to the conduct of foreign relations.

Adoption as diplomacy

The practice of one person formally adopting another as his or her son or daughter was certainly no innovation of the eleventh century. Leo VI attempted to regulate, and to require ecclesiastical sanction for, a custom which was clearly widespread and of long standing in his time.[182] This form of notional paternity, charged with moral responsibilities, bears an obvious resemblance to that of spiritual paternity and the terminology used for the two kinds

ed. Renauld, I, 87-88, tr. Sewter, 122. Anna indicates that oaths could be taken amongst Byzantine soldiers to try and forge mutual loyalty, as well as by conspirators against the emperor: *Al.*, VII.iv.2, L, II, 102.23-27, S, 228; *Al.*, VIII.ix.6-7, L, II, 154.22-30, S, 267-268. One conspirator making effective use of oaths to seize the throne was Alexios himself: below, 116. See also N. Svoronos, 'Le serment de fidélité à l'empereur byzantin et sa signification constitutionelle', *REB*, 9 (1951), 109-110, 118-119, 135-137, repr. *Études sur l'organisation intérieure, la société et l'économie de l'empire byzantin*, (London, 1973), VI. For other instances of oaths involving foreigners, see P. Classen, 'Mailands Treueid für Manuel Komnenos', *Akten des XI. Internationalen Byzantinistenkongresses 1958*, (Munich, 1960), 80-84, repr. *Ausgewählte Aufsätze* (Sigmaringen, 1983), 148-152; J. Ferluga, 'La ligesse dans l'empire byzantin', *ZbRad*, 7 (1961), 110, repr. *Byzantium on the Balkans* (Amsterdam, 1976), 412; J.H. Pryor, 'The oaths of the leaders of the First Crusade to emperor Alexius I Comnenus: fealty, homage—πίστις, δουλεία', *Parergon*, n.s., 2 (1984), 121.

[181] For a review of the political history of the period, see P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle* (Le monde byzantin, Paris, 1977), 256-259, 294-298; Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 48-56, 93-94, 98-102. The fact that officials renewed their oaths of loyalty to a newly enthroned emperor in itself made oath-swearing a common occurrence in the later eleventh century: see Svoronos, 'Serment de fidélité', 107-108. That these bonds did not efface the classical ideal of *philia* or the practical existence of groups of friends and patronage networks is demonstrated by M.E. Mullett, 'Byzantium: a friendly society?', *P&P*, 118 (1988), 6-10, 14-20.

[182] Leo VI, *Novelles*, ed. P. Noailles and A. Dain (Paris, 1944), novel 24, 94-95.

of bond was not always kept distinct.[183] Baptismal sponsorship could forge or reinforce political ties and was used for this purpose in both internal and external affairs in the eleventh century. For example, Michael IV tried to compensate for his isolation as a parvenu in the City 'establishment' by becoming godfather to an exceptional number of new-born children, while Alexios Komnenos stood as godfather to a number of Turkish notables.[184] But baptismal sponsorship was not an option, if one wished solemnly to form a direct bond, having the force of kinship, with a Christian adult. Adoption offered the means of forming such a bond, and it seems quite often to have been used to solemnise and concretise a political affinity during the middle and later years of the eleventh century, serving as an alternative to marriage-alliances. The aged empress Zoe was persuaded to adopt the youthful Michael Kalaphates by Michael's ambitious kinsmen.[185] Some thirty years later, Romanos IV Diogenes adopted Nikephoros Bryennios as his brother, a distinct but comparable and apparently highly charged bond.[186] Subsequently Bryennios was offered the opportunity to become the adopted son of Nikephoros III Botaneiates, together with the dignity of caesar. Bryennios, in signalling his willingness

[183] Adopted sons are called 'spiritual' in such books of ritual as a thirteenth-century Cypriot formulary: ed. K.N. Sathas, *Mesaionike Bibliotheke*, VI (Paris, 1877), formularies 18, 19, 628-629, 630; R. Macrides, 'The Byzantine godfather', *BMGS*, 11 (1987), 140-142; *eadem*, 'Kinship by arrangement', 110-111.

[184] Skylitzes, Μιχαὴλ ὁ Παφλάγων, 20, ed. Thurn, 405; above, n.59; *Al.*, VI.ix.4, ed. Leib, II, 66.4-5, S, 200; *Al.*, VI, xii.I, ed Leib, II, 74.21, S, 206; *Al.*, VI.xiii.4, L, II, 81.4-5, S, 211; *Al.*, XIII.v.2, L, III, 105.12-13, S, 409; Macrides, 'Byzantine godfather', 150-151, 155; Brand, 'Turkish element', 16-17.

[185] Psellos, *Chronographia*, ed. Renauld, I, 67, 87, tr. Sewter, 100-101, 122.

[186] *Al.*, X.iii.3, L, II, 196.16-17, S, 300-301. This adoption was well enough known, and its connotations remembered, for an imposter claiming to be a son of Diogenes to call Bryennios his 'uncle' and to expect him to open the gates of Adrianople to him in 1095: Bryennios, ref, ed. Gautier, Introduction, 19-20. See also, on the adoption of the youthful Basil the Macedonian as a brother by the custodian of a church, H.G. Beck, 'Byzantinisches Gefolgschaftswesen', *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosoph.-Historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte*, 1965, 9-10, repr. *Ideen und Realitäten in Byzanz*, (London, 1972), XI; on Basil's adoption as the brother of the son of the widow Danelis, *ibid.*, 11.

to accept, seems to have supposed that the ceremonies of the creation of a caesar and adoption could be merged into one, or so it appeared to his author-grandson.[187] The emperor, for his part, was obviously trying to buy off a particularly formidable rebel by this double-offer of adoption and a title which had often been preliminary to the imperial dignity itself. Botaneiates subsequently made the same offer of adoption, for essentially the same reason, to Alexios Komnenos after Komnenian forces had broken into Constantinople.[188] Alexios had already become the adopted son of Botaneiates's wife, Maria, in accordance with 'the procedure (τύπος) long followed in such cases', a ceremony staged in the imperial palace.[189] This apparently took place at the initiative of the Komnenos family, at a time of tension between them and the emperor's entourage, and when doubts as to the future of Botaneiates's régime were mounting. It served as a parallel to another form of bonding, the marriage of Alexios's elder brother to a cousin of Maria:[190] where marriage or baptismal ties were not feasible, notional bonds such as adoption were introduced. Anna Komnene expatiates on the rationale behind these Komnenian démarches. It gave them access to the palace[191], and aligned them

[187] Bryennios, IV.3, ed. Gautier, 262-265. For the ceremony in the tenth century for the creation of a caesar, see Constantine VII, *De cer.*, I, 52 (43), ed. A. Vogt, II (Paris, 1939), 26-32. A generation earlier, the rite of adoption had still been regarded as basically distinct from the ceremony of elevation to the dignity of caesar: Psellos, *Chronographia*, I, 67, tr. Sewter, 101. See Macrides, 'Kinship by arrangement', 117.

[188] *Al.*, II.xii.2, L, I, 98-99, S, 100-101. Isaac Komnenos had likewise been promised adoption by Michael VI and proclamation as caesar: his forces were then advancing towards Constantinople in August 1057: Skylitzes, Μιχαὴλ ὁ γέρων, ch. 11, ed. Thurn, 496-497.

[189] *Al.*, II.i.5, L, I, 65.16-18, S, 74.

[190] *Al.*, II.i.4, L, I, 64.24-25, S, 74. The brother, Isaac, had long been married to Eirene, Maria's first cousin: Barzos, *Γενεαλογία Κομνηνῶν*, I, 67-68, 79.

[191] *Al.*, II.iii.4, L, I, 70.25-30, S, 79. Maria for her part was probably above all anxious to secure an imperial crown for her small son, Constantine, and saw in the Komnenoi potential supporters or co-rulers. On Maria's solicitousness for her son, see M. E. Mullett, 'The "disgrace" of the ex-basilissa Maria', *BS*, 45 (1984), 207-208.

with an influential figure at court, at once protecting them and keeping the door ajar for further advances towards the throne.

It is highly probable that many other such bonds of adoption were forged between individuals involved in the power struggles of the second half of the eleventh century. We hear mainly of the offers of adoption and marriage which involved eventual winners or beneficiaries, the Komnenos and the Bryennios families: the adoption of Nikephoros Bryennios as a brother of Romanos IV Diogenes is recorded only because it chanced to be invoked by a pretender claiming to be a son of Diogenes.[192] While the relationship created by adoption was established by means of ecclesiastical rites, at the level of high politics it could serve essentially to protect one party from another, and not even the relationship between Alexios and empress Maria was proof against doubts: Alexios and his brother are said to have subsequently been very anxious to 'win over' (ὑποποιεῖσθαι) Maria, and 'not to fall out of favour with her' in their fear of court intrigues against themselves.[193]

Adoption was, then, being used as a particularly solemn form of mutual guarantee between members of the ruling class. Alexios, once emperor, extended the practice to the adoption of foreign notables and, as already noted, Ekkehard of Aura regarded this as 'his custom'.[194] If Ekkehard's statement were taken literally, it would suggest that Alexios was already adopting foreigners before his reception of the leaders of the First Crusade. It could be that prominent Turks or nomad chieftains were being dubbed Alexios's 'sons' in the sense that they had been formally adopted by him, rather than simply because they had been raised from the baptismal font by him. Contemporary accounts from their vantage-points are lacking and we know of Alexios's adoption of the Crusade leaders only from the Latin sources: not insignificantly, Anna is silent on this score. At any rate, Alexios treated the leading members of the First Crusade and of subsequent Crusading armies to a ceremony which made them his adopted 'sons'. In 1108 the defeated Bohemond was submitted, or

[192] Above, n.186.

[193] *Al.*, II.iii.4, L, I, 70.23-24, 71.1-2, S, 79.

[194] Above, 81.

re-submitted, to such a ceremony at Dyrrachium, supplementing his liege-homage.[195] Presumably Alexios saw this form of bonding as a mutual pledge between himself and the Latin leaders: it would have given them relatively easy access to Alexios and his palace, rather as he and his brother had enjoyed access through their ties by marriage and adoption with empress Maria;[196] and it imposed upon Alexios, as their 'father', the duty to look after their welfare. At the same time, the Crusaders committed themselves as 'sons' to a degree of deference towards Alexios and were, at the very least, debarred from acts of violence towards their 'father'. Adoption thus supplemented oaths as a means of forming ties with potentially troublesome individuals. Each rite was intended to institute norms of behaviour directly between the emperor *as a person* and the oath-taker or the 'son'.

As with oath-taking from foreigners, so with adoption, Alexios may not consciously have been innovating in maintaining the practice while on the throne. He is, so far as I am aware, the first reigning emperor of Byzantium formally to have adopted a foreign potentate or notable as his son.[197] The novelty may have been dulled by the facts that Macedonian emperors had addressed a number of foreign rulers as their 'children' and that individual rulers actually had been their godchildren. The absence of a sharp differentiation between spiritual paternity and adoption would

[195] *Historia belli sacri*, ch.142, *RHO*, III, 229; G. Rösch, 'Der "Kreuzzug" Bohemunds gegen Dyrrachion 1107/1108...', *Römische Historische Mitteilungen*, 26 (1984), 186; Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek', 236-239.

[196] Marriage-ties, in contrast, did not play an important part in Alexios's external diplomacy, at least as far as members of the Komnenian house were concerned. Below, n.205.

[197] The Persian shah, Kavad (Kabades), is said to have asked emperor Justin I to adopt Kavad's favorite son, Khosroau (Chosroes). Justin was only willing to carry out an adoption of an informal sort, 'befitting a barbarian'; this seems to have been symbolised by a gift of precious arms and armour to the adoptee. Justin's response proved to be unacceptable to Kavad: Procopius, *History of the Wars*, I.xi, tr. H.B. Dewing (Loeb, giving J. Haury's text, London-Cambridge, Mass., 1914), 88-93; K. Güterbock, *Byzanz und Persien in ihren diplomatisch-völkerrechtlichen Beziehungen im Zeitalter Justinians* (Berlin, 1906), 29-31.

have contributed to the obfuscation.[198] Moreover the adoption of eminent Byzantines by reigning emperors and empresses was not unknown in the generation before Alexios's accession. But whether Alexios was innovating consciously or not, was he doing so in a truly 'fatherly' spirit, accepting in full his obligation to cherish and protect his new charges? Or was this simply another device in Alexios's efforts to divide and repulse the encircling barbarians? This brings us back to the question posed earlier, of whether Alexios's conduct of diplomacy represents anything more than legerdemain, concealing very traditional techniques and attitudes. The answer may be that Alexios's position was profoundly ambivalent.

Western responses to Alexian diplomacy

The main thrust of the evidence points towards Alexios as an ice-cool practitioner of *Realpolitik*. Even those practices which bespeak a more personal relationship, the acceptance of oaths of fealty and other pledges, and the adoption of notables as sons, do not necessarily invalidate such an interpretation. Adoptions in the later eleventh century were the product of political calculation: they were often proffered to usurpers, active or putative, as a means of pacifying them. However, there is an obvious connection between these personal bonds and the prominence of foreign individuals in the role of counsellors and senior commanders. The Marquis de la Force drew attention to the fact that nearly all the witnesses on Alexios's behalf to his treaty with Bohemond in 1108 bear western names. Some were Normans who had entered Alexios's service during or after the Balkan campaigns of Guiscard and Bohemond, while others may have joined him during the Crusade.[199] The Marquis may well have been correct to read into these Latin signatories an attempt by Alexios to deepen Bohemond's humiliation

[198] Above, 80, 108-109.

[199] *Al.*, XIII.xii.28, L, III.138.28-139.5, S, 434; Marquis de la Force, 'Les conseillers latins du basileus Alexis Comnène', *B*, 11 (1936), 156-163; D.M. Nicol, 'Symbiosis and integration. Some Greco-Latin families in Byzantium in the 11th to 13th centuries', *ByzForsch*, 7 (1979), 123-132; E. Jeffreys, 'Western infiltration of the Byzantine aristocracy: some suggestions', in *The Byzantine aristocracy*, 202-203; McQueen, 'The Normans and Byzantium', 465-470.

and to display his hold over westerners.[200] But the very high proportion of western names also reflects the fact that Alexios numbered western notables among his confidants. The three westerners whom he is said to have consulted as to how to defeat Bohemond all feature on the witness-list and Anna says of one of them, Peter Aliphas, that he was 'a man of renown for his military exploits and for the unshakeable fidelity which he always maintained towards the emperor'.[201] Alexios had shown confidence in sending him with Tatikios at the head of the Crusading armies in 1097 and Peter took charge of Plastentia (Plasta, modern Elbistan), an important cross-roads, on Alexios's behalf.[202] Still more striking is the testimony of the *Gesta Francorum*, that at that time Guy, a son of Guiscard, was one of Alexios's confidants, and was called with 'certain others to a secret council'. The topic of discussion was said to have been the situation at Antioch.[203] Some of these individuals, Peter Aliphas among them, left their bones in Byzantium, and their descendants belonged to the ruling class of the empire, although not all of them became unequivocally committed to

[200] de la Force, 'Conseillers latins', 163-164. Alexios's dispositions did not prevent Bohemond from presenting his campaign as victorious, judging by the earlier western sources' allusions to it: Rösch, '"Kreuzzug" Bohemunds', 184-188.

[201] *Al.*, XIII.iv.4, L, III, 101.15-17, S, 405-406; Nicol, 'Greco-Latin families', 131. Anna's words might be compared to those which Orderic Vitalis puts in the mouths of Greek and Syrian defenders of Laodicaea, in an address to their Frankish rescuers: Alexios '"is most anxious to have Franks about him, for he admires and loves their loyalty and courageous determination...Place yourselves confidently in his hands"': Orderic, *Hist.aeccl.*, V, 274-275. These self-serving words were concocted a generation after the event. But they have value in reflecting one view of Alexios's predisposition, probably current among his contemporaries.

[202] *Gesta Francorum*, IV, 11, 25-26. On Plastentia, see F. Hild and M. Restle, *Kappadokien, Tabula Imperii Byzantini*, 2 (Vienna, 1981), 109 and n.429; 260.

[203] *Gesta Francorum*, IX, 27, 63. Orderic Vitalis could describe Raymond of Toulouse in 1100 as 'inter familiares convivas eius [sc. Alexii] ac consiliarios': Orderic, *Hist.aeccl.*, V, 276-277. Orderic's description is a simplification, but not a total distortion, and it recalls Anna's anachronistic portrait of relations between her father and Raymond at the time of the First Crusade: by 1100 their relations really were cordial: *Al.*, X.xi.9, L, II, 235.1-11, S, 330; *Al.*, XI.viii.1, L, II, 36.19-21, S, 355.

Alexios. By the time of Bohemond's attempt on Dyrrachium, Guy was supporting his half-brother from a position of command, and looked after the Byzantine hostages during Bohemond's negotiations with Alexios. Neither the date nor the circumstances of Guy's return to the west are clear. He seems to have been in contact with Alexios during the siege of Dyrrachium, and he was supposed by contemporaries to have been bought by him into betraying Bohemond's plans.[204]

If the Alexios of the *Mousai* and of his daughter's protestations took the westerners *en masse* for greedy, impulsive hordes of marauders, individual westerners and others of foreign provenance did find favour and responsibilities with him. In a sense, after all, Alexios was himself an outsider to Constantinople, even though he could claim an uncle for an emperor, was married to a member of the Doukas family and sought to bind various great Constantinopolitan and provincial families more tightly to himself by arranging marriage-alliances of members of his own family with them.[205]

[204] Anna's evidence as to Guy's role in supervising the hostages is too detailed and precise to be discarded: *Al.*, XIII.ix.8, L, III, 120.19-26, S, 420; *Al.*, XIII.x.2, L, III, 122.10-11, S, 421. His continuing, or resumed, links with Alexios cannot have been suspected by Bohemond. He is stated to have made a deathbed confession of his betrayal in Orderic, *Hist.aeccl.*, VI, 102-105; cf. McQueen, 'The Normans and Byzantium', 464-465.

[205] It seems reasonable to suppose that Alexios arranged the marriages of his younger brother Adrian and more distant relatives as well as those of his offspring: Barzos, *Γενεαλογία Κομνηνῶν*, I, 116-117, 177-180, 198-200, 255, 259; cf. Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 105. Alexios's anxiety to bind important Greek families to his cause partly accounts for the relative paucity of foreign marriages contracted by his children. But he may well have been wary of giving foreign potentates justification for intervening in Byzantium's affairs, as champions of their relatives' rights. Eirene-Piroska and Eirene, the two apparently foreign-born spouses of Alexios's sons, hailed respectively from Hungary and, perhaps, Russia, distant unthreatening lands: Barzos, *Γενεαλογία Κομνηνῶν*, I, 204-205, 233-234. See, however, the reservations about the latter Eirene's origins voiced by A. Kazhdan, 'Rus-Byzantine princely marriages in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 12/13 (1988/1989), 419-420. Anna regards the betrothal of Guiscard's daughter to Michael VII's son as an extraordinary act of folly, giving succour to 'the tyrants from Normandy': *Al.*, I.x.2, L, I, 37.15-26, S, 53; *Al.*, I.xii.1-2, L, I, 42-43, S, 57. It is possible that Michael's marriage negotiations with the

He seems to have had few dealings with members of the senatorial order as a group and Anna's suspicion of, and contempt for, the unwarlike, yet unreliable, populace of the City was probably inherited from her father.[206] The two figures who were, together with members of the Komnenos and Doukas families, instrumental in raising Alexios to the throne were of alien provenance: Gregory Pakourianos, the Georgian-born military commander, and Constantine Humbertopoulos, whose father was clearly a westerner and quite possibly an eminent Norman. It was, according to Anna, on the morrow of securing these two commanders' support inside the City that Alexios fled from Constantinople to join his army in revolt. He is said to have exchanged sworn pledges with Pakourianos and also to have taken 'an oath' from Humbertopoulos.[207] Alexios duly honoured his undertaking to make Pakourianos grand domestic of the west, and Pakourianos kept faith until death, while Humbertopoulos seems to have been Alexios's key lieutenant in commanding contingents of Latin mercenaries during the 1080s.[208]

Normans were cited by Alexios and the patriarch as grounds for banning him from returning to the throne in a decree of April 1081: see the garbled statement of Orderic, *Hist.aeccl.*, IV, 14-15; V. Grumel, *Régestes des actes du patriarchat de Constantinople*, I.3 (Bucharest, 1947), no. 916, 30.

206 On Alexios's relations with the senate see Zonaras, XVIII.29.23, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 766; Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 309-310. Anna's contempt: *Al.*, X.ix.4, L, II, 221.30-222.3, S, 319-320. Alexios was on his guard for unrest in the City during his absence on campaign: *Al.*, IV.iv.1, L, I, 150.29-151.3, S, 140.

207 *Al.*, II.iv.7, L, I, 73.27-74.4, S, 81; *Al.*, II.iv.9, L, I, 74.28, S, 82. Pakourianos in his *Typikon* of 1083 emphasises the blood which he had spilled during his career in the service of the emperors: P. Gautier, 'Le *typikon* du sébaste Grégoire Pakourianos', *REB*, 42 (1984), 33-34. On the problem of Pakourianos's ethnic identity, see A.P. Kazhdan, *Armyane v sostave gospodstvuyushchego klassa vizantiyskoy imperii v XI-XIIvv.* (Erevan, 1975), 61; A. Sharf, 'Armenians and Byzantines in the time of Alexius I Comnenus', *Confrontation and coexistence, Bar-Ilan Studies in History*, II (1984), 121-122.

208 Humbertopoulos was put in command of 'the Frankish *tagmata*' for the first campaign against Guiscard, an occasion which might be expected to have tested their loyalties, as well as Humbertopoulos's own: *Al.*, IV.iv.3, L, I, 152.2-4, S, 141. Five years later, the transfer of Humbertopoulos with his western soldiers from Asia Minor was expected, albeit vainly, to be of decisive significance for the imminent offensive against the Pechenegs: *Al.*,

Both these men were already established in Byzantium in 1081 and did not owe their careers to Alexios: Humbertopoulos had been in Byzantium long enough to acquire an Orthodox Christian name. But their utility to Alexios lay partly in the fact that they were, ultimately, outsiders to the megalopolis and did not have extensive ties with the wealthy and influential families of the capital. When Humbertopoulos broke his oath and long-standing fidelity to plot against Alexios in 1091, his fellow conspirator was also an alien, Ariebes 'the Armenian'.[209] Alexios's quite speedy rehabilitation of Humbertopoulos—by 1095 he was in command of forces ready to repel a Cuman invasion[210]—implies confidence that his intrigue with Ariebes had been a momentary aberration and, perhaps, that any future intrigues of Humbertopoulos would be ineffectual. By the 1090s Alexios had groomed his own coterie of trusted commanders, notably Tatikios, the son of a 'Saracen' (most probably Turkish) prisoner-of-war; Monastras, who was 'a half-barbarian' (μιξοβάρβαρος) and spoke Turkish; and Manuel Boutoumites, whose competence and loyalty to Alexios were beyond reproach.[211] But he may well have been on the look-out for fresh talent among the westerners who thronged Constantinople in 1097 and subsequently: a few serviceable commanders and confidants might emerge from among the scores who swore fealty. Admittedly, we do not know by name any individuals who rose

VI.xiv.4, L, II, 83.22-28, S, 213. Humbertopoulos was still commander of the westerners at the battle of Lebounion in 1091, ten years after his first oath to Alexios: *Al.*, VIII.v.5, L, II, 141.21-22, S, 257. On the importance of Humbertopoulos, see de la Force, 'Conseillers latins', 164; Gautier, 'Synode des Blachernes', 240; Nicol, 'Greco-Latin families', 116-117; McQueen, 'The Normans and Byzantium', 437.

209 They are said to have 'drawn a not ignoble (ἀγεννές) number' of persons into their plot: *Al.*, VIII.vii.1, L, II, 146.29-147.2, S, 261. Anna's failure to name any other participants in the plot suggests that no really prominent City grandees or members of the Komnenian family were implicated.

210 *Al.*, X.ii.6, L, II, 193.9-10, S, 298.

211 For Tatikios: Bryennios, *Histoire*, ed. Gautier, 288-289; *Al.*, IV.iv.3, L, I, 151.23-27, S, 141; Gautier, 'Synode des Blachernes', 252-254; Brand, 'Turkish element', 3-4. For Monastras: *Al.*, XI.ii.9, L, III, 15.1-2, S, 339. For Boutoumites's proven loyalty over a lengthy period: *Al.* X.xi.6, L, II, 236.10-11, S, 331.

by this route into Alexios's innermost circle: there is no obvious successor to Humbertopoulos among the commanders of the later years of Alexios's reign. But the number and significance of Latin counsellors and aides in those years has probably been obscured by our narrative sources. Chronicles of the Crusades and of Bohemond's attempt on Dyrrachium are generally hostile towards Alexios and have little to say about individual westerners in the service of the 'unjust', 'wretched' emperor.[212] Anna, for her part, seldom dilates on them: it is mainly from the text of the treaty of 1108 that we chance to learn of the Latins in Alexios's inner councils.

Alexios's zeal for forging personal ties with foreigners was, then, something more than a procedural device in his arsenal of diplomatic ploys. It sprang from his experience as a youthful field-commander and also from the particular requirements of his régime. Alexios's patronage of those bound to him by kinship was remarked upon by contemporaries and is well-enough known.[213] Rather less appreciated is the way in which recourse to foreigners as counsellors and agents interlocked with this tendency. The Komnenian kin-group was only the most durable and affluent[214] of a number of such affinities, which continued to coagulate and, in the teeth of imperial patronage, to manage a degree of rivalry: thus even Alexios's brother-in-law, the *panhypersebastos* Michael Taronites, was drawn to the cause of Nikephoros Diogenes.[215]

[212] *Gesta Francorum*, I, 3, 6. See, however, above, n.203. And we may note the incidental mention by Ralph (*Gesta Tancredi*, ch. 72, 658-659) of 'other nobles of the Franks' who led 'around 10,000 armed men', together with Alexios and his forces, supposedly in the direction of Antioch (below, n. 238). Some of these 'nobles' presumably stayed on at Byzantium after the Crusade, like a number of knights in the company of Robert of Flanders and Robert of Normandy: above, n.159.

[213] Zonaras, XVIII.29.24, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 766-767. See, e.g. Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture*, 71; Magdalino below, xxx-xxx.

[214] Zonaras complained of the lavish gifts from state funds and stipends bestowed on the 'kinsmen and servants (θεραπόντων)' of Alexios. Their residences were 'the size of cities': Zonaras, XVIII.29.24, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 767.

[215] *Al.*, IX.vi.5, L II, 174.27-29, S, 282; *Al.*, IX.viii.4, L, II, 180.14-16, S, 286.

From Alexios's point of view, an alien origin was not necessarily a bar to a senior post. In fact, at a time when a Byzantine-born careerist might respond to tugs of allegiance from kinsmen or other family associations, an 'outsider' presented positive advantages to Alexios. Such a person's loyalties would not be divided between Alexios and his relatives or patrons in Byzantium, and his ambitions were likely to fall short of the throne itself.[216] His bond was an essentially personal one with Alexios, and he lacked an independent power-base or source of wealth. One must emphasize that these bonds comprised different strands, and were of varying strengths. On the one hand were the ties of affection between Alexios and Tatikios, the captive's son and his childhood playmate. Tatikios played a prominent part in the face-to-face encounter between Alexios and the supporters of Nikephoros Diogenes.[217] On the other hand, there were the solemn bonds created by the swearing of fidelity or by Alexios's act of adoption or baptism of a foreigner, often a visitor passing through Byzantium. These rites, although formal and intended to be binding, were merely the first stages in the development of a relationship, and only after a long apprenticeship, entailing frequent converse with, and scrutiny by, Alexios, might they lead to a high degree of trust and responsibility. Alexios seems to have prided himself as a judge of character.[218]

It was, then, in large measure the exigencies of Alexios's political position that predisposed him to employ foreigners—outsiders *par excellence*—not merely as mercenaries *en masse* but also as senior commanders, counsellors and envoys.[219] He did so to an even

[216] In the mid-1070s Roussel de Bailleul incited caesar John Doukas to proclaim himself emperor, but cannily made no overt bid for the throne for himself: Bryennios, II.17, ed. Gautier, 176-177; Hoffmann, *Territorialstaaten*, 17, 80-81.

[217] *Al.*, IX.ix.3, L, II, 182.6-11, S, 288. Brand ('Turkish element', 15, 25) remarks on the advantage to Alexios of Tatikios's lack of connections with Byzantine society and of his unfree origins.

[218] *Al.*, X.xi.3, L, II, 231.27-29, S, 327. Anna's claims for him in this respect probably echo Alexios's own.

[219] Alexios's penchant for 'barbarians from captivity' and former slaves (i.e. Turks, for the most part) as his 'underlings' in the palace is remarked upon by

greater extent than had his immediate predecessors.[220] This could not but affect his diplomacy. Much can be said in favour of Alexios's brand of diplomacy. His bias towards personal bonds not only reflected tendencies in Byzantine political life but also suited the loose-knit and volatile nature of the empire's neighbours. In contrast with the situation fifty or so years earlier, Alexios at his accession faced a fast-shifting kaleidoscope of power-groups; these had more of the characteristics of war-bands than they did of established states such as Fatimid Egypt or Abbasid Baghdad. A leader's authority among the Turks, Normans and steppe-nomads rested to a considerable extent on success in warfare, while his efforts to exact service from, and to discipline, his kinsmen and nobles were liable to provoke rebellion or secession. Wealth and power could swiftly accrue in the hands of talented and determined adventurers, and almost as swiftly dissolve. It therefore made very good sense for Alexios to forge ties directly with many members of the dominant strata among such peoples, in the hope of gaining influential sympathizers or of prompting revolts or defections to his own side.

Such a background may help us understand Alexios's willingness to consort with important foreigners and banter with them.[221] And on occasion he did not shrink from emphasizing—perhaps exaggerating—the parlousness of his military plight or the urgency of his need for aid in, for example, the messages which his emissaries in the early 1090s conveyed to western potentates.[222] The distinctive timbre of his communications with

George Tornikes in the mid-twelfth century: George Tornikes, or. 14, ed. J. Darrouzès, *Georges et Dèmètrios Tornikès, Lettres et discours* (Le monde byzantin, Paris, 1970), 234-235.

220 Nikephoros Botaneiates, like some other contenders for the throne in the 1070s, had relied heavily on Turkoman warriors (above, 107), and his intimate counsellors were unfree, 'two barbarians of Slavic stock, Borilas and Germanos': *Al.*, II.i.3, L, I, 64.3-5, S, 73.

221 Even Anna represents him as engaging in repartee with 'Latinos', the Crusader who had seated himself on his throne: *Al.*, X.x.7, L, II, 230.1-11, S, 326. This tallies with Ralph's account (*Gesta Tancredi*, ch.18, 619-620) of his semi-jocular reaction to Tancred's insolence: above, 96-97.

222 Raymond, *Liber*, 41; tr. Hill, 23; above, 74-75 and n. 35; ep. 1, ed. Hagenmeyer, 130-134; de Waha, 'Lettre d'Alexis Comnène', 119-123.

influential foreigners also resounds in his letters to abbot Oderisius of Monte Cassino. In his protestations that he was the worst of sinners and unworthy, he was striking a contrite note which would probably have been alien to emperors of a generation or more earlier.[223] At the same time, he sought the good offices of well-placed monastic and ecclesiastical figures. He sent well-timed messages of sympathy for the pope and citizens of Rome, besides gifts to the monastery of Monte Cassino, and he is said to have 'endowed with copious gifts and precious ornaments not only places overseas but also places on the other [presumably northern] side of the Alps'. In addition, a monastery was founded at Civitot near a route traversed by pilgrims, and was placed under the charge of Cluny.[224] Alexios apparently hoped that the monks would put a favourable complexion on his actions if their opinion or counsel was sought by magnates or Crusading knights. Alexios was, then, capable of considerable resourcefulness in his quest for influential sympathizers who might predispose others in his favour. He took great pains over the details of implementing the largesse. In advising that gifts should be presented 'readily and with a gentle manner'[225] he was speaking from experience. When he remunerated the Cumans after the battle of Lebounion,

223 Ep. 11, ed. Hagenmeyer, 152-153; 295 n.8.

224 Peter the Venerable, ep. 75, ed. G. Constable, *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, 2 vols (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), I, 209 (gifts for places, presumably churches and monasteries, on 'the other side of the Alps', and the foundation for the Cluniacs at Civitot); *ibid.*, II (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 148-149, 292 (commentary); below, 132; F. Trinchera, *Syllabus graecarum membranarum* (Naples, 1865), no.61, 78-79; no.86, 113; *Chronica Monasterii Casinensis*, ed. H. Hoffmann, *MGH SS*, XXXIV (Hanover, 1980), 485-486, 493, 514, 525; Dölger, *Regesten*, no.1207, 1208, 1229, 1261, 1262, 1263, 1264; P. Classen, 'Die Komnenen und die Kaiserkrone des Westens', *Journal of Medieval History*, 3 (1977), 207-210, repr. *Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, 171-175; H.-D. Kahl, 'Römische Krönungspläne im Komnenhause?', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 59 (1977), 264-265 and n.11. Alexios's grant of annual payments in gold for 'all the churches in Venice' in his celebrated chrysobull for Venice may have been made in the same spirit: *Al.*, VI.v.10, L, II, 54.17-19, S, 191; S. Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio nel XII secolo. I rapporti economici* (Venice, 1988), 6-7.

225 *Mousai*, I, 345; above, 72.

he presided over the disbursements in person.[226] It was Alexios's attention to the vanity and whims of individuals, as well as the sheer value of his gifts, that earned him approbation from some of his foreign visitors. Stephen of Blois regards his father-in-law, William the Conqueror, as 'almost nothing' in comparison with Alexios and praises Alexios's generosity: 'he endows all our princes most lavishly, assists our knights with gifts and refreshes all our rank-and-file with feasts'.[227] Stephen, for all his vanity in supposing that he was trusted and favoured before other leaders, cannot have been the sole satisfied recipient of Alexios's gifts and welfare in 1097. Through this outlay he was giving substance to his claim to be treating the Crusaders 'not as a friend or a relative but as a father.'[228]

Even so, there is an important difference between Alexios's stance and that of earlier imperial practitioners of *captatio benevolentiae*. Not only was Alexios professing fatherly care: he was often doing so face to face, solemnizing it through such rites as adoption. These foreigners, at least whilst in the vicinity of Constantinople, were given to believe that his financial and organizational resources were great. Their expectations, thus aroused, were that Alexios's assumption of the obligations of father and lord would be matched fairly promptly by actions. And when it was a question of joint military operations and close liaison, as in the case of the Crusades, the actions would be scrutinised more closely than when a foreign potentate had been based well beyond the empire's borders and when an emperor's professions of friendship and benevolence had only to be substantiated by means of gifts of money and other valuables. No doubt the expectations of Alexios's 'sons', vassals and other foreign clients varied between peoples and occasions, as did Alexios's own undertakings to them. And of course individuals' reponses to his blandishments varied during the First Crusade. One might

[226] *Al.*, VIII.vi.4, L, II, 145-146, S, 260-261; above, 101.

[227] According to Stephen, the emperor had kept him 'most respectfully with him' for ten days, presumably as a personal guest in the palace: ep. 4, ed. Hagenmeyer, 138, 139. Above, n. 68.

[228] Ep. 11, ed. Hagenmeyer, 153 (letter to Oderisius).

nonetheless suppose *a priori* that the very vigour with which Alexios insisted on his personal commitment to the well-being of the Crusaders invited their keen appraisal of his deeds, and risked provoking outrage at any apparent gap between rites, words and deeds.

That this in fact happened is suggested by certain episodes during the First Crusade. They encapsulate Alexios's combination of traditional techniques with more recently-developed modes of bonding political adversaries or rivals to oneself. Pechenegs and Tourkopouloi were, as we have already noted,[229] licensed to mark and intimidate the Crusaders as they trekked across the Balkan mountain ranges, many of them doing so in mid-winter. Emissaries, some of them westerners, arrived proposing 'brotherhood...and sonship', and offering gifts, even as the Turkic nomads continued to menace the Crusaders. We should not dismiss as literary embellishment or hindsight the sense of bewilderment and suspicion which some Latin narratives of these démarches convey.[230] Once Alexios had taken on the responsibilities of father and lord of all the leading Crusaders save Raymond, their expectations of active support from him were high. There is contemporary evidence, untinged by hindsight, that just after the capture of Nicaea Alexios's bounty evoked mixed reactions from a significant proportion of the Crusaders. Anselm of Ribemont wrote that the leaders 'withdrew [from their final meeting with Alexios], some with good will (*benevolentia*) and others otherwise', and this even though, on Anselm's avowal, the leaders had 'received from him gifts of inestimable worth'.[231] These leaders had undergone Alexios's diplomacy of feasts, visits to his palace and ready access to his presence. Anselm's statement suggests the shortcomings of this technique. It is difficult to believe that Alexios's insistence on homage and fealty from the remaining recalci-

[229] Raymond, *Liber*, 38, tr. Hill, 18. Above, 85.

[230] Raymond, *Liber*, 41-42, tr. Hill, 23-24.

[231] Ep. 8, ed. Hagenmeyer, 144-145. Anselm's own personal relations with Alexios cannot have been bad, seeing that he was sent by the other leaders back to Alexios as their spokesman a few days later: *ibid.*, 145. Alexios's presents to the leaders are described as being 'from his own treasury' by Stephen of Blois: ep. 4, ed. Hagenmeyer, 140.

trants, a sense of being cheated of plunder at Nicaea or the sheer greed which Anna deplores suffice to explain the resentment palpable in some of the early sources.[232] There was, I suggest, already a sense of a discrepancy between Alexios's stance as lord and father and his commitment to the enterprise as they conceived of it, a triumphal pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Perhaps his very show of personal affability exacerbated their disappointment at his failure to accompany them. Alexios himself was sufficiently concerned about this turn of sentiment by the spring of 1098 to write to influential western figures specifically in order to refute it. And much later Anna insisted, as if in rebuttal of the accusations of half-heartedness or worse, that Alexios would have preferred to have gone with the Crusaders to Nicaea, and to have taken part in the campaign.[233]

The Byzantine role in the reduction of Nicaea had been far from insignificant, but if the Crusaders had known its precise nature, their sense of Alexios's double-dealing would have been all the sharper. Alexios essentially used them as bogeymen, brow-beating the Turkish defenders into surrender, for fear of meeting with something worse. The early western sources, while decrying Alexios's mild treatment of the Turkish prisoners and showing some awareness that they were permitted to enter his service,[234] are

[232] *Al.*, XI.iii.1-2, L, III, 16-17, S, 340; Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek', 208-210 (homage and fealty); Raymond, *Liber*, 44, tr. Hill, 26-27; Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, I, 10, RHO, III, 333-334; Hagenmeyer, 258 n.32 (plunder); *Al.*, X.v.4, L, II, 206-207, S, 308; *Al.*, X.vi.4, L, II, 211.18-21, S, 312 (greed); cf. Lilie, *Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 24-25.

[233] Ep. 11, (to Oderisius), ed. Hagenmeyer, 153; cf. *ibid.*, 77-78, nn.2 and 5, on 294-295; *Al.*, X.xi.10, L, II, 235.24-31, S, 330.

[234] Above, 86. The initiative for the terms is ascribed to the Turks even by Baldric of Dol, who puts into their mouths words of which Alexios would in reality have approved: 'protect us from those villains (*carnificibus*), who up to now have been so gravely troubling you': *Historia Hierosolymitana*, I, 26, *RHO*, IV, 30. Other early twelfth-century sources are more exercised by the emperor's clemency towards the Turks or by the distribution of plunder: *Gesta Francorum*, II, 8, 16-17; Robert the Monk, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, III, 5, RHO, III, 758; Raymond, *Liber*, 44, tr. Hill, 26; cf. L. Buisson, 'Eroberrecht, Vassalität und byzantinisches Staatsrecht auf dem ersten Kreuzzug', repr. *Lebendiges Mittelalter. Aufsätze zur Geschichte des Kirchenrechts und der Normannen*

ignorant of the full extent of the collusion. They show still less cognizance of what seems to be another instance of Alexios's manipulation: the direction of the Crusaders on the route best-placed to alarm the Turkish masters of the cities of the western coastal plain and to induce them to surrender 'without a struggle' to John Doukas's force.[235] Alexios could count himself skilful or lucky that his strategy does not seem to have been fathomed by the Crusaders. The issue which aroused much bitterness was Alexios's failure, in Crusader eyes, to honour his undertakings and provide sufficient aid, notably during the siege of Antioch. His failure to lead an army to Antioch, coupled with his insistence on the transfer of the city to his authority, made matters worse.[236] Yet while the hostile Latin sources accuse him of failing to come to the relief of the besiegers, they do not charge him with committing his main forces and resources elsewhere, to an operation having only a secondary bearing on the Crusaders' venture. They even suppose that by spring 1098 he was on the march to the assistance of the Crusaders, and that the unduly pessimistic report of the fugitive Stephen of Blois determined him to turn back.[237] A fair degree of

(Cologne-Vienna, 1988), 414 and n.114. The account of William of Tyre, representing Tatikios as the initiator of negotiations, is most probably an intelligent surmise, lacking any foundation in William's sources: his erroneous mention of Tatikios instead of Boutoumites, as the initiator, suggests this: William, *Chronica*, 3, 12 (11), 209-210.

[235] Above, 88 and nn. 96, 97.

[236] France, 'Anna Comnena', 27-28; Lilie, *Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 30-32, 40-44, 48-53; Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek', 272-276.

[237] *Gesta Francorum*, IX, 27, 63-65; Baldric of Dol, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, III, 12-13, 72-73; Robert the Monk, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, VI, 15-16, 816-817; Albert, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, IV, 40-41, 417-418; Orderic, *Hist.aeccl.*, V, 106-109; William, *Chronica*, 6, 10-12, 319-322. Some Latin writers credit Alexios with 'hastening' to the Crusaders' relief: Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos*, V, 26, *RHO*, IV, 200. Ralph (*Gesta Tancredi*, ch.72, 658-659) reports as 'common talk' (*fama*) that Alexios's first reaction to Stephen's news was to want to press on to relieve the Crusaders; he was only deterred by Stephen's claim that Alexios's army would be vastly outnumbered by the Turks. Ralph is an important early twelfth-century source, seemingly independent of the *Gesta Francorum*. However, the possibility that the *fama* was ultimately of Byzantine—Alexian—inspiration cannot be ruled out. In so far as Alexios at Philomelion was swayed by reports of anyone, it may well have been Peter

commitment to the Crusaders is thus imputed to Alexios, and odium heaped upon 'that cowardly old fool of a knight', Stephen, and his fellow faint-hearts. Presumably, the Crusaders were only vaguely aware of Doukas's campaign or were fobbed off with assurances that it formed part of the emperor's endeavours to help them.[238] It is, in my view, an open question whether Alexios led his army to Philomelion to hasten to the Crusaders' relief or primarily to consolidate the gains which Doukas had made, evacuating Turkish prisoners and the residual Greek-speaking population from what was to become a border zone.[239] At all events, his prior-

Aliphas, who joined him from his post at Plastentia. Whether Peter was summoned by Alexios or fled to him of his own accord (as Anna implies) is unknown: *Al.* XI.vi.1, L, III, 27.21-22, S, 348; Runciman, *History of the Crusades*, I, 239, 240, n.1. See also, on the degree of responsibility apportioned to Stephen by Latin sources, Lilie, *Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 33-34, 42, 49-50, nn.214, 215, 365-366.

[238] There was current in the camp at Antioch the rumour that a large imperial army 'composed of many races' was approaching, but that the (barbarous) peoples comprising it feared to join forces on account of their earlier atrocities towards the Crusaders (i.e. in the Balkans). Tatikios is alleged to have been the source of these 'fictions'. This would have been in the opening weeks of 1098: Raymond, *Liber*, 55, tr. Hill, 37. Earlier in the siege, 'many' leaders were counting on the arrival of reinforcements from the emperor: Raymond, *Liber*, 46-47, tr. Hill, 30; cf. France, 'Anna Comnena', 30. Alexios is stated by the *Gesta Francorum* (II, 6, 12; VI, 16, 34-35) to have pledged to send ships, men and provisions to the Crusaders. There may well be a link, albeit tenuous and ill-defined, between Alexios's pledges, Doukas's campaign and the optimism of 'many' Crusading leaders that substantial help from the Byzantines would reach them at Antioch. Some may well have supposed that Alexios was on his way to them at the beginning of July, 1098, when Hugh of Vermandois was despatched to him: Lilie, *Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 34 and n.164 on 356.

[239] Philomelion (Akşehir) lay near the route taken by the Crusaders almost a year earlier: Belke, *Galatien und Lykaonien*, 78 and map at end. Alexios's halt at Philomelion in the company of Tatikios gave him the option of journeying to Antioch, but it also enabled him to appraise such recent gains as Polybotos (Bolvadin), which lay not far away (above, n. 97). Anna maintains that Alexios evacuated the population in that area only after deciding against a march to Antioch and in the shadow of an apprehended Turkish attack: *Al.*, XI.vi.4-5, L, III, 28.31-29.23, S, 350. Anna's version tallies with the early and far from pro-Byzantine testimony of Ralph, *Gesta Tancredi*, ch. 72, 659. However, Anna also divulges that Alexios sacked and razed to the ground many towns and settlements *en route* to Philomelion, taking numerous prisoners besides putting

ity was, as Anna indicates at this juncture as elsewhere, the 'advantage...to the Roman empire': if he pressed on to help the besiegers of Antioch he 'might lose the city of Constantine as well'.[240] Unexceptionable as these priorities were in a head of state, they ill became a self-styled 'father' who had imposed on his sons a ceremony of homage and fealty which most probably involved oaths on relics and a written document.[241] Alexios may well have supposed that the Crusaders were strictly bound by their sworn undertakings to hand over Antioch and all further gains of former 'Roman' possessions to the south.[242] But if he really supposed that they would honour these undertakings irrespective of his own actions or inaction, he gravely miscalculated. For a strong element of reciprocity was inherent in the counter-oaths which Alexios swore to their leaders and in most of the diverse western notions about fealty and homage performed by one prince to another in the eleventh century.[243]

By treating the Crusaders as ultimately expendable tools of the Byzantine state while calling for devotion of sons for a father, Alexios was, in effect, trying to have the best of both worlds, those of personal mutual obligations and *Realpolitik*. Yet in many ways he contrived for himself the worst. For the sense among westerners of a discrepancy between his professions and his actual

to death many Turks: *Al.*, XI.vi.1, L, III, 27.18-19, S, 348; *Al.*, XI.vi.6, L, III, 29.26-28, S, 350. Ekkehard of Aura maintains that Alexios had laid waste 'the settlements which were around the public highway' rather than risk going to the Crusaders' relief at Antioch: *Frut.-Ek.*, 168-169. Alexios's actions suggest an attempt to create a *cordon sanitaire*, shielding the western districts seized (and not devastated) by Doukas, rather than concern to secure a land route to Antioch, whose besiegers' prospects deteriorated as Alexios lingered on his work of devastation. See, however, Ralph, *Gesta Tancredi*, ch.72, 658-659, and above, n. 237; Lilie, *Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 50, 356 n. 162; France, 'Anna Comnena', 31-32; above, 87-88.

[240] *Al.*, XI.vi.4, L, III, 29.4-5, S, 349-350.

[241] Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek', 235, 237-238.

[242] Lilie, *Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 18-20 and n. 88 on 343-346; 38.

[243] Ganshof, 'Recherche', 61 and n.9; *idem*, *Feudalism* (London, 1964), 83-84, 94-97, 98-99; J. Le Patourel, *The Norman empire* (Oxford, 1976), 202, 207-208, 217 and n.1; France, 'Anna Comnena', 30; Pryor, 'Oaths of the leaders of the First Crusade', 128, 131-132; Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek', 235-236.

commitment to their cause can only have been exacerbated by the affair of Antioch. It was sufficiently keen and widespread by September 1098 for Bohemond to exploit it in his postscript to the letter in the name of the leading Crusaders to Urban II. 'The unjust emperor' is alleged to have 'promised us many good things, but did very little (*minime fecit*). For all the bad things and whatever obstacle he could place in our way, these he inflicted on us'.[244]

We gain further clues as to what earned for Alexios this reputation among some westerners in the eye-witness account of Ekkehard of Aura. Ekkehard belonged to one of the contingents which went in fulfilment of Crusading vows in the wake of the First Crusade, passing Constantinople in June 1101. Ekkehard relates that imperial emissaries constantly appeared and proposed peace, only to vanish 'like hot cinders'; at the same time he and his companions were harried by the Pechenegs for twenty days, 'now from the rear..., now from the side, now attacking us openly from the front'.[245] All the leaders of this expedition were received by Alexios, adopted as his sons, required to take oaths of fealty and endowed with gifts. Subsequently, they had daily 'discussions' with the emperor. Meanwhile, Ekkehard and his fellows had to wait on the eastern shore of the Bosporos and depend on the alms and the special markets set up for them; all towns and fortified places were barred. Alexios seems thus to have repeated the techniques that he had applied to participants in the First Crusade.[246] Presumably, he regarded them as a winning combination of proven worth. Yet judging by Ekkehard's account, Alexios's efforts won him more suspicion and distrust than gratitude. Ekkehard describes the passage across the straits to face the Turks as 'that benefit (which) the accursed Alexios is used to providing

[244] Hagenmeyer, no.16, 165.

[245] *Frut.-Ek.*, 164-165; above (on Alexios's treatment of the First Crusade), 84-85. Ekkehard drafted the recension of his chronicle relating his experiences on Crusade only four years after the event, in 1105-January 1106; his account is distinguished by its 'richness and precision': *Frut.-Ek.*, 33 (introduction).

[246] Alexios continued to resort to adoption, or confirmation of adoption, with the worsted Bohemond in 1108: *Historia belli sacri*, ch.142, RHO, III, 229; above, 112.

with alacrity for the pilgrims'.[247] And he records a rumour which circulated through the waiting Crusaders' camp in June 1101: Alexios had appraised their position and was now urging on the Turks to attack them, and 'now says he is making the Franks fight the Turks in just the same way as dog eats dog'.[248] Ekkehard claims that all the rank-and-file called Alexios 'not emperor but traitor' and he lays the blame for the subsequent destruction of the land-army at Alexios's door.[249] There is no reason to suppose that Ekkehard was untypical among the participants of the 1101 Crusading expedition in imputing every reverse or misfortune to Alexios's machinations. It was a line that many subsequent Latin writers would take, both about Alexios and about the Greeks of their own day. It is illustrated vividly in William of Tyre's account of the forementioned expedition and its destruction by the Turks, who had allegedly been forewarned by Alexios of the Crusaders' route. The emperor acted 'like a scorpion; for while you have nothing to fear from its face, you will do well to avoid injury from its tail'.[250]

The above considerations may serve to answer some of the questions raised earlier,[251] but a certain ambivalence remains, as is perhaps appropriate in any discussion of Alexios's stance. It is clear that he considered his outlay on the Crusaders to have been very generous. He was asserting as much in 1098, and his daughter was writing some five decades later of his alleged chagrin over 'those innumerable gifts and stacks of gold' and 'money beyond all counting'.[252] Yet in his own *Mousa*, Alexios treats the hoarding of treasure for ready disbursement to 'stop the greed of the na-

[247] *Frut.-Ek.*, 164-165.

[248] *Frut.-Ek.*, 166-167.

[249] *Frut.-Ek.*, 170-171. On this débacle, see S. Runciman, *A history of the Crusades*, II (repr. Harmondsworth, 1965), 25, 27-29.

[250] William, *Chronica*, 10, 12, 467. It has been said of William that he 'spoke with two voices' in recounting Byzantium's relations with the First Crusaders: the sources inspiring his anti-Greek tone may have been 'oral traditions which consistently vilified Alexius', as well as such works as the *Gesta Francorum*: P.W. Edbury and J.G. Rowe, *William of Tyre. Historian of the Latin east* (Cambridge, 1988), 136, 134.

[251] Above, 75-76.

[252] Hagenmeyer, no.11, 153; *Al.*, XIV.ii.2, L, III, 146.26-27, S, 439; *Al.*, XIV.ii.3, L, III, 147.10, S, 439.

tions' as one of the basic axioms of foreign relations and he seems to regard his treatment of the First Crusade as the cardinal vindication of this policy.[253] Equally, as we have seen, Alexios applied to the leaders of the *arrière-croisade* the self-same combination of gifts, oaths and personal charisma that he had arrayed for the great 'massed movement hither from the west' four years earlier. Presumably similar treatment was meted out in other, less well-documented episodes involving armed masses of foreigners.[254] Thus Alexios's maxims in his *Mousa* were applied in practice. But other practices such as the adoption of leading westerners as sons and the assiduous recruitment of individual foreigners as servitors and, potentially, counsellors find no place in Alexios's advice to his son, even though they played an important part in his diplomacy and are its distinguishing marks. Alexios may not have been fully aware of the extent to which he was innovating and, in so far as he was aware, he may well have been disinclined to signal his departure from imperial precedent. He would probably anyway have drawn a distinction between the collective masses of 'barbarians', unpredictable, envious and greedy, and individual foreigners, who might perform useful service for him and each of whom had the makings of a good 'Roman' in him. Because of the exigencies—or rather, frailties—of his régime, he had special reason positively to welcome talented outsiders and carefully to monitor and reward their performance. Those few who graduated into his inner councils could advise him on the customs and tactics of their compatriots, and were generally detached from the plots of scions of disappointed rival families such as Nikephoros Diogenes—'the sedition of his own subjects [whom]...he suspected...even more'.[255]

'Father' or 'Scorpion'?

Alexios's 'affable' demeanour face to face with foreigners was not, then, simply an artifice of calculated charm. He had every reason to greet them warmly as potential future props of the régime. Un-

[253] Above, 71-72; *Mousai*, I, 325.
[254] Above, 111-112.
[255] *Al.*, XIV.iv.4, L, III, 161.4-5, S, 449-450; above, 69.

fortunately, his frequent recourse to 'divide and rule' and other traditional devices of imperial diplomacy was glaringly obvious and it jarred with his insistence on tight personal bonds with large numbers of foreign notables. The distinction which Alexios drew between foreigners as individuals and in the round would not have been apparent to foreigners in that the same oaths and solemn commitments were exacted from ultimately expendable tools of diplomacy as from those entering his service full-time, as a career. The reaction of many might be expected to have been a mixture of confusion and suspicion. The scepticism of westerners is most pronounced, partly because they were the principal objects of Alexios's diplomacy and partly because their level of culture enabled them to perceive and record some of the most blatant instances of 'divide-and-rule' and 'carrot-and-stick'. Their scepticism about Byzantine professions of fatherly concern and affection may have been shared by the steppe-nomads, but it was intensified and perpetuated by the ability to keep written records of, or at least allegations about, the emperor's promises. Narratives concerning the emperor's treatment of the Crusaders at Constantinople were being composed, copied and circulated within a few years of the event. It might later be said of Alexios—in a letter addressed to his son—that he 'extended the hand of his beneficence to the most far-removed persons' in the west,[256] and his foundation of a monastery for Cluniacs at Civitot was possibly in fulfilment of his pledge to build 'a Latin monastery and an inn (*hospitium*) for the Frankish poor' on the eve of the assault on Nicaea in 1097.[257] But his foundation won him no thanks from Raymond d'Aguilers, who records only the pledge, and very little recognition from any other extant Latin source. His lavish distribution of gifts after the capture of Nicaea was recorded at the time as having been received by 'some with good will and others otherwise'.[258] If Alexios represents his conduct of diplomacy as a dignified and basically successful exercise in the repulse of barbarians, his reputation among the

[256] Peter the Venerable, ep. 75, ed. Constable, *The Letters of Peter the Venerable* I, 209; above, n.224.
[257] Raymond, *Liber*, 44, tr. Hill, 26.
[258] Above, 123.

majority of westerners who did not aspire to enter his inner circles seems to have been of a 'scorpion' rather than of 'the most generous giver of gifts'.[259] His reputation in the west undoubtedly owed something to the black propaganda of his rogue-servitor Bohemond, propaganda of which he was well-aware and against which his largesse towards monasteries associated with pilgrimage was partly directed.[260] But first-hand reactions to Alexios's treatment of the rank-and-file, such as that of Ekkehard of Aura, suggest that Bohemond's allegations fell on ears already predisposed to believe the worst about Alexios and his 'thousand-formed guile'.[261]

[259] Orderic, *Hist.aeccl.*, IV, 14-15.

[260] *Al.*, XII.viii.5, L, III, 79.20-80.4, S, 389-390. Bohemond accused Alexios of harrassing pilgrims bound for Jerusalem and thereby justified his own attack on Byzantium. One of Alexios's undertakings to Bohemond after defeating him was that he would protect the pilgrims. Bohemond's propaganda, however, contrived to present this concession in the west as the successful attainment of the attack's main objective: Rösch, '"Kreuzzug" Bohemunds', 184-186, 187-190. See also Chalandon, *Essai*, 242 and n.8; J.G. Rowe, 'Paschal II, Bohemond of Antioch and the Byzantine empire', *BJRL*, 49 (1966), 190-192, 196-202; Lilie, *Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, n.27 on 374; 72-73; McQueen, 'The Normans and Byzantium', 463-464.

[261] *Frut.-Ek.*, 134-135; above, n.14.

6

Alexios Komnenos: 'not in the strict sense of the word an emperor'

Patricia Karlin-Hayter

It is, of course, no new idea that with Alexios Komnenos a new form of empire took over. In a colloquium devoted to that emperor, it would seem better to over- rather than under-present this question. Lemerle wrote: 'The eleventh is the century of the decisive turning point (tournant décisif), after all the reversals of situation, as in a classical drama. Even the phoney *deus ex machina*, the providential saviour is there: Alexios Komnenos'.[1]

Zonaras, for one, did not see him in that light. The historian writes, summing up his account of the emperor:

> He was undeniably full of good qualities, but such as are praiseworthy in a private person, not those that make a good emperor. For the qualities required in private life are not the same as for an emperor. Moderation, equity, being slow to anger, a temperate way of life—these suffice for a private person. An emperor, in addition, must pursue justice, care for his subjects' [well-being] and preserve the ancient customs of the commonwealth. He was, on the contrary, out to change the ancient ways, and his most earnest pursuit, to alter them; he handled affairs, not as public and belonging to the common interest, nor did he see himself as a trustee (οἰκονόμος) but as the master, considering and terming the βασίλεια his private house. To the members of the senate he did not allow due honour, nor care for them suitably, but rather was at pains to humble them. Nor yet was justice the same for all, justice whose characteristic is to give to each according to his deserts. But he, when it came to his relations or some of those who served

[1] P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Le monde byzantin, Paris, 1977), 252.

> him, distributed the public monies by the cartload. They received fat yearly donations, and enjoyed such wealth that they could have at their service a following appropriate, not to private persons but to emperors, and buy houses the size of cities, indistinguishable, for their luxury, from palaces. To the rest of the nobility he did not show the same generosity—to say no worse, and spare the man. All this forbids considering him an emperor, in the strict sense of the word.[2]

Arising from Augustus's choice of offices, the original theory of the Roman empire was that sovereignty was vested in the senate and the people, but the people had delegated theirs to the emperor. He was the representative of the people. This formulation was expressly taken over by Justinian, who included the senate. He added that delegation was for good, and could not be taken back, but this does not invalidate the theory: the Roman state consists of the senate and the people; their authority is delegated to the emperor and this is the seat of his legitimacy: *Postea vero quam ad maiestatem imperatoriam ius populi Romani et senatus felicitate reipublicae translatum est*.[3]... The Byzantine senate differed, at first, fundamentally from the Roman. It was, originally and in concept, the emperor's council of top servants of the crown. The empire was run as a bureaucracy. The aim was to keep it operating—and, of course, 'great'. This was the job of the emperor, assisted by civil servants, his *douloi*, chosen, not for birth but for efficiency.

The iconoclasts changed the conceptual basis. The emperor was no longer mandated by the people, but by God to care for his people:

> Since He has entrusted the power of empire to us ... ordering us to feed His most faithful flock, we believe that nothing can be more urgent or important than, in exchange, to govern in judgement and justice those entrusted by Him to us [etc].[4]

[2] Zonaras, XVIII.29.19-27, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst (CSHB, Bonn, 1897), III, 766-767.

[3] Preface to *Novella* 62, *De senatoribus*, ed. R. Schoell, *Corpus iuris civilis, III, Novellae* (Frankfurt am Main, 1968), 332.

[4] C.A. Spulber, *L'eclogue des Isauriens* (Cernautzi, 1929), 3; *Ecloga. Das Gesetzbuch Leons III. und Konstantinos' V*, ed. L. Burgmann (Frankfurt, 1983), 160. 21 ff.

For practical purposes there is no change. The preoccupation with justice reappears, a few lines later, with a practical impact:

> Because of the difficulties arising from a legislation scattered among so many books, and couched in terms that some find difficult and some completely impossible to understand (τοῖς μὲν δυσδιαγνωστὸν...τοῖς δὲ καὶ παντελῶς ἀδιαγνωστόν) in particular those who do not live in this God-guarded city,[5]

a decision was taken to prepare a code that would be clearer and more concise, and to this task the emperor addressed himself, assisted by his ἐνδοξότατοι πατρίκιοι, the ἐνδοξότατος κοιαίστωρ, ἐνδοξότατοι ὕπαρχοι and other god-fearing men. We may contrast the serried ranks of cousins and in-laws—with a few outsiders hovering round the edge—at the synod of 6 March 1166. It is true that things had been carried much further than under Alexios, but the process began with him and it is already recognisable at the Blachernai synod of 1094.

To return to the empire as a state where the emperor, assisted by his *douloi*, that is to say the civil service or bureaucracy, governed alone, in the interests of the people, there is plenty one could say about theory and reality. But the definition is by no means an empty word, and the evidence suggests that few were the emperors who did not try to give it a little substance. During the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh, the long recovery after the critical times when Slav or Moslem had harried up to the walls of Constantinople, a time when the military problem had been overriding, another lesson had been driven home, to the effect that the enemy was not the external enemy alone. This period saw Romanos I, Constantine Porphyrogennetos, Basil II,[6] and Michael VII, all attempting to curtail through legislation the provincial magnates' continual increasing of their estates and their power at the expense of the peasantry. Basil in particular is fa-

[5] Burgmann, *Ecloga*, 161. 36 (slightly abridged).

[6] Nov. II Impp. Romani, Konstantini et Christophori, Zepos, *JGR*, I, 198-204; XXIX Imp. Basilii Porph., Zepos, *JGR*, I, 262-272. See also N.G. Svoronos, 'Remarques sur la tradition du texte de la novelle de Basile II concernant les puissants', *Mélanges Ostrogorsky*, II, *ZbRad*, 8/2 (1964), 427-434.

mous for his attacks on wealth already acquired, as well as curbs on future acquisition. Romanos, it is true, at the same time made marriage alliances with the great families.

And these were already not only supplying generals and provincial governors, but beginning to take over the offices in Constantinople. The bureaucratic empire was being gradually undermined; it was not yet challenged. On the contrary, Basil II stepped up the measures against the provincial aristocracy to an extent that would probably be inconceivable under earlier reigns.[7] The danger presented by this immense body of private power, always liable to sporadic eruptions, was a sufficient motive, even if it was probably not yet perceived as potentially a united challenge to the power of the state. But this motive was not the only one. Basil, and his immediate predecessors, recognised that it was necessary to preserve the free peasantry.

Defending the poor against those who would devour them was certainly what is required of a Christian, but, needless to say, was not entirely disinterested. In an emperor it was *philanthropia*, and, genuine or simulated, the *persona* required a show of it. Romanos, in his *Novella*, speaks of 'The deep groaning of the poor, for whose sake the Lord rises up. If God arises to avenge [them], He who made and saved and reigns over us, how could we neglect them and forget them? There is no consolation for the poor but from the emperor'.[8] Basil confirms both these beneficial aspects: such action 'is useful to the community and favoured by God' and, also 'it contributes to the fisc and is of value to the state'.[9]

The theory was familiar, and the contrast between two *basilikoi logoi* by the future archbishop of Ochrid, Theophylact, illustrates it neatly: 'Come now, and learn the rule of imperial power (βασιλείας τύπον) in succinct terms. In general, there are three kinds of constitution, the first is called lawful and termed *basileia*, because it is the *basis* of the *laos*, their support, in accordance with

[7] Apart from rebellions, the Maleinos affair: John Skylitzes, *Σύνοψις ἱστοριῶν*, ch. 21, ed. I. Thurn, *Synopsis historiarum* (CFHB, 5, Berlin and New York, 1973), 340.

[8] Zepos, *JGR*, I, 198-204.

[9] Zepos, *JGR*, I, 262-272.

the etymology of the word...Hear now the marks that distinguish *basileia* from tyranny. To begin with, the tyrant seizes power by violence, for he does not receive the reins of government from the citizens, but takes possession of them with blood and murder...'.[10] Addressing a child emperor, Constantine Doukas, Theophylact may reasonably be assumed to be endeavouring to educate him. None of this appears in his *Logos* to Alexios: bravery is the great theme, and when he turns to this emperor's *philanthropia*—for it would be inconceivable to omit *philanthropia* when praising an emperor—he dwells exclusively on conspirators Alexios has not had executed. Supporting the πένητες in resisting the encroachment of the powerful by giving them legal rights is not exactly the same thing as charity, in which Alexios I indulged when he had any money left over from pensioning γάμβροι.[11]

Svoronos writes: 'La fameuse législation contre les puissants ne prit jamais le caractère d'une réforme sociale...Elle...ne visait essentiellement que des buts fiscaux'.[12] Of course the empire was not paradise, with each man reclining and eating the fruit of his vine and his fig-tree. Far from being a reform, the legislation of the tenth-century emperors was an attempt to keep to acquired positions, to hold back the tide. Fiscal considerations were prominent, but it would be a failure of assessment to let this obliterate the concept of the emperor as responsible for the state and for God's flock, perhaps, even, to dismiss it as of no social significance.

Though condemned to failure, and though the dangers did not become apparent to Constantinople until it was out of hand, and though only those who were responsible for the dangers were in a position to police them, the attempt to preserve in the 'poor' at

[10] Theophylact, or. 4, to Constantine Doukas, *Théophylacte d'Achrida, I, Discours, traités, poésies*, ed. P. Gautier (CFHB, 16/1, Thessalonike, 1980), 195. See also John the Oxite, ed. P. Gautier, 'Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite contre Alexis Ier Comnène', *REB*, 28 (1970), 40.

[11] Zonaras, XVIII.21.13, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 732-733: ἐντεῦθεν τῶν βασιλείων προσόδων, μᾶλλον δ' εἰπεῖν τῶν κοινῶν καὶ δημοσίων, οὕτω διανεμηθεισῶν τὸ βασιλικὸν ταμεῖον ἢ τὸ κοινὸν πρυτανεῖον ἐστένωτο.

[12] N.G. Svoronos, 'Société et organisation intérieure dans l'empire byzantin au XIe s.: les principaux problèmes', *XIII Int.Cong.* (Oxford, 1966), XII, 371-389; repr. *Études sur l'organisation intérieure*, (London, 1973) IX, 4.

least a counterweight to the 'powerful' was very consciously and actively pursued for a brief spell: the empire as supreme magistrature went down before the empire of the clan,[13] but not without a fight. The most spectacular move was Michael VII's setting up the φοῦνδαξ, the abortive attempt at a state monopoly in wheat. Our source for it is essentially that most valuable and informative, but not unprejudiced, source Attaleiates.[14] Though he is foaming at the mouth, indeed, at times, incoherent with rage, we learn that the entrepôt so designated was set up at Rhaidestos, and there all local wheat had, compulsorily, to be delivered for a fixed price, although, as Attaleiates implies, those to whom the wheat belonged could have got really good prices simply by taking it to places where there was shortage or, with any luck, famine. The government's idea was to prevent speculation on famine.

That, at least, was the reason given; the 'real' one, as we know from Attaleiates, was that Michael VII—Parapinakes—who had no will of his own, had transferred his obedience from the caesar John Doukas, whom it was right to obey, to a nasty piece of work called Nikephoritzes, who set about stripping decent people of everything they possessed—wheat in particular. The situation was saved just in time, as you remember. Michael lost his throne and Nikephoritzes got his deserts.

As a sideline, it is, of course, very difficult to know anything about Michael's will or lack of it. Not only was he dethroned, he has the bad luck to be praised by Psellos (whose pupil he was).[15] It is just as credible that he chose Nikephoritzes deliberately, and proposed to use him as collaborator in a deliberately chosen policy. Irrelevant, anyway: if an emperor is 'bad' enough or, as in the present case, 'inept' enough, he gets usurped and a good emperor takes his place—sometimes after a bit of trial and error, as here

[13] This expression has come under criticism recently. Obviously terms from one culture should not be applied in a blanket manner to another, the opposition to 'magistrature' does not imply tartan kilts, but the opposition I wish to underline is acceptably covered by the term.

[14] Michael Attaleiates, *Ἱστορία*, ed. I. Bekker, *Michaelis Attaliotae Historia* (CSHB, Bonn, 1853), 201. 19 - 204. 12; 248. 22 - 249. 3.

[15] Michael Psellos, *Χρονογραφία*, ed. E. Renauld, *Michel Psellos, Chronographie* (Collection byzantine, Paris, 1967), I, 172-185.

(Botaneiates). But fairly soon the good emperor, Alexios Komnenos, took things into his capable hands, and the shocking unfairness of having laws favour one category of subjects at the expense of another was cleared up.

Interesting reference to the emperor's subjects is to be found in the *Mousai*.[16] This *oeuvre*, built on plagiarism, illustrates, in a way, the new outlook. This is particularly so of a couple of passages I do not feel confident are original. Contemporary, surely, and remarkably reminiscent of Attaleiates, but much as I would like this dotting of the 'i' to come from Alexios's pen, I find it hard to believe he composed them. There was enough turmoil round John's accession for someone who knew that Alexios had written *Νουθετήματα καὶ Διατάγματα* for his son to infiltrate a passage, when there was no more danger that Alexios would see, but before the composition reached the new ruler. The emperor's subjects are described two or three times as consisting of 'the city and the army'. What exactly does this mean? The *Mousai* tells us: in it the importance-of-reigning-justly topos occurs several times, suitably developed. One concrete example, taken from real life, is however given, one wrong the emperor must prevent, lest the city be filled with hatred of him. And what is this injustice singled out for attention? If the emperor allows civil servants to question the validity of chrysobulls, the City will not stand for it.[17] The conclusion would seem to be that Alexios's subjects are the army and the holders of chrysobulls. His duty is to these. The negative evidence of the historians suggesting that he did not keep up the traditional exchanges between the sovereign and the urban *demos* receives positive confirmation: according to Theophylact of Ochrid, even when he rests from war, there is nothing soft about him, no horse races or pop nonsense: hunting is his relaxation.[18] How peasants might fare may be found in a text to which I shall shortly turn.

Whoever wrote the lines I have drawn attention to, a revolution in the fullest sense of the word had taken place. The nature of the

[16] *Mousai*: ed. P. Maas, 'Die Musen des Kaisers Alexios I', *BZ*, 22 (1913), 348 ff. Alexios was at least the official author.

[17] *Mousai*, I, 343-350.

[18] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 233.24-235.1.

state had changed completely. Both Basil's uncompromising legislation and what we know of action taken may be compared with Alexios's *Novella* XXXIV on the *Palaia Logarike*.[19] It is, you might say, organic: a first *hypomnestikon* is registered Friday 6 March, 2nd ind. (1094), a first *lysis* is followed by three more *lyseis* in reply to successive requests for more explicit wording. The request from the *genikos* John Tzirithon begins:

> Taxes for the outer dioceses of Thrace and Macedonia used to be levied yearly and come in, as per the ancient rule (καθὼς τύπος ἀρχαῖος). However, in the third indiction Kamateros Demetrios undertook to bring the ἀμφόστιχον of the said dioceses up to double. He failed to deliver, and his house lying next to the hippodrome was confiscated [hapax].

Kamateros presumably won the competitive tender for operating the Thracian-Macedonian taxation by promising to double receipts. The theoretical grounds, perhaps remeasuring, are not clear. At all events Kamateros failed to honour his contract and his house was confiscated. All's well that ends well. Taxation, however, never ends, and Tzirithon continues: 'For the fourteenth indiction [levying] was attributed to the *proedros* Nikephoros Artabasdos, who gave satisfaction for that indiction and the fifteenth'. However difficulties arose from lack of standardisation, both in the coins and from one village to another, and guidance is asked for. Alexios replied that he had already given a perfectly clear and unambiguous *lysis* on the subject:

> All alleged ambiguity has been introduced from no other source than the shameless greed of the διοικηταί. For my majesty is not referring to the officials. [The διοικηταί] should be made to pay the appropriate penalty for their excessive exactions (ὑπεραπαίτησιν). However my majesty...rules simply that they be assessed and asked to pay as they have assessed.

In 1092 there was a revolt in Cyprus. It was put down, and the emperor proceeded to reestablish order. He promoted one Kalliparion as κριτὴς καὶ ἐξισωτής, 'a man who did not belong to the

[19] Zepos, *JGR*, 326-340.

nobility, but enjoyed a great reputation for justice, integrity and modesty. And since the island had to be defended, he made Eumathios Philokales stratopedarch, supplying him with warships and cavalry'.[20]

On the one hand a strategos, on the other a civil official 'whose jurisdiction was both juridical and fiscal'—in Hendy's words: 'One of the thematic officials who had gained independence from the strategos'. And Hendy notes: 'It is, as it happens, neither Europe nor Asia that provides the classic example of the contemporary division of jurisdictions, but the island of Cyprus. There, as late as 1092, Alexios I appointed one Calliparius [sic] as judge and tax-assessor (...) while he appointed Eumathios Philocales as military governor'.[21]

One of the traditional representatives of authority is missing, that of the church. The archbishop of Cyprus at the time was a survivor, not a member of the new team sent to bring the new order to the troubled Cyprus scene—troubled not only by the recent rising. The emir of Smyrna, Tzachas, was ravaging the islands, and there were memories of an earlier rising, at a date when the form of empire was still, nominally, centralised, absolute monar-

[20] *Al.*, IX.ii.4, L, II, 164, S, 272-274. Leib's editorial note: 'Alexis choisit un magistrat intègre à qui il confie le soin de répartir les impôts de façon équitable, comme c'est l'office de l'ἐξισωτής...C'est d'eux que dépendait également le fameux impôt appelé «épibole» ἐπιβολή. Aussi devaient ils être essentiellement sages et intègres'. And perhaps he was 'intègre', but from Anna's point of view, that meant that he obtained as much money as possible for Alexios. The author of a monograph as recent as Cheynet's, essentially excellent, *Pouvoirs et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)* (ByzSorb, 9, Paris, 1990), is still able to accept, completely uncritically, Anna's judgements. See also N. Oikonomides, 'Αὐθένται τῶν Κρητικῶν τὸ 1118', *Actes du IVe Congrès international d'études crétoises* (Herakleion, 1980), 308-317.

[21] M.F. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine monetary economy, c. 300-1453* (Cambridge, 1985), 430. Mouzalon does not give names, but punning allusions, sometimes unambiguous: Eumathios Philokales is εὐμαθὴς εἰς κακίαν, ὀξὺς μαθητὴς τοῦ κακοῦ διδασκάλου. His office is not specified. Nor is that of the other villain, εὐσεβὴς φεῦ! τὸν Σατὰν σέβων μόνον. So *Eusebios* as first name. Then, apparently, a compound of λέων: 'grabbing, shameless, head-on λέων' and, in the next line: χαμαιλέων; eleven lines further down, summing up: 'Lucky is he who escapes the dragon and the lion...'. The other main clue is λεῦκος. I have not recognised him anywhere.

chy operating through the bureaucracy, even if nothing was left save the form. I mention this affair that had taken place fifty years ago because the grievance is the same. The rising was led then by Theophilos Erotikos, who was the governor. Whatever one makes of that, he had been able, says Sir George Hill, 'to inflame the minds of the Cypriots against...the judge and collector of public taxes, accusing him of extortion—a charge which, in view of the record of Byzantine administration, must have found ready belief, whether it was true or not'. Though the titles used are different, and fifty years earlier the status was probably not the same, the attributions of δικαστὴς καὶ πράκτωρ τῶν δημοσίων φόρων are very much those of Kalliparion, κριτὴς καὶ ἐξισωτής.

To return to the beginning of the twelfth century, in due course the archbishop died, and Alexios chose Nicholas Mouzalon to take his place. It is he who relates the second affair, as an eye-witness, in more than one thousand lines of iambic trimeters written to defend himself from attack on the grounds that he had forsaken his flock, and therefore not entirely disinterested.[22]

He affirms that he put up considerable resistance to Alexios's offer of the see of Cyprus,[23] but was finally persuaded to accept it. The exact date of all this, as of his arrival on the island, is not known, but he resigned in 1110,[24] after a stay that cannot have been very long. Hill and Hendy say he came there not earlier than 1107,[25] but 'the fact that Mouzalon was in touch with Eumathios Philokales on Cyprus is no clue to the length of his episcopate on the island' says Gautier 'for that high-ranking servant of the state was undoubtedly in office there several times'.[26] At all events, fif-

[22] Mouzalon, *Paraitesis*, 884-912, ed. S.I. Doanidou, 'Ἡ παραίτησις Νικολάου τοῦ Μουζάλωνος ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Κύπρου', *Ἑλληνικά*, 7 (1934), 109-150.
[23] Mouzalon, *Paraitesis*, 174-238, ed. Doanidou, 116-118.
[24] Gautier, 'Le synode des Blachernes'. His dating of all this affair seems to me by far the most convincing.
[25] Sir George Hill, *History of Cyprus* (Cambridge, 1940), I, 300; P. Karlin-Hayter, 'The tax-collectors' violence drove the bishop into the cloister?', *Stephanos. Studia byzantina ac slavica Vladimíro Vavřínek ad annum sexagesimum quintum dedicata*, *BS*, 56 (1995), 171-182.
[26] Gautier, 'Synode de Blachernes', 271: 'He was named as stratopedarch of Cyprus after the recovery of the island by the *megadoux* John Doukas, end

teen years after the revolt had been put down he was the military governor there. Mouzalon gives us his opinion of him; unlike Anna Komnene's, it is not high.

He found the island, says he, suffering from an oppressive fiscality ruthlessly imposed. Furthermore members of the hierarchy were working hand-in-glove with Philokales and his team, in particular assisting them in their exploitation of the peasantry. 'It is not words the poor need' is his answer to the reproach that, by resigning his see, he is forsaking his flock...'They are oppressed with heavy demands for taxes and 'gifts'...[The oppressors] devour the [fruit of] working men's toil...Those who have nothing they torture...They bind them hand and foot...hang them up and tear their flesh with rods...They hang up dogs next to them and bait them...to make them bite human flesh...Many die in this violence...One man suffers in another's place in the name of co-responsibility (ἀλληλεγγύως)'.

Obviously in the long history of the empire, injustice and brutality in the collecting of taxes had occurred before Alexios seized the throne, but tax-farming steps it up: it is no longer sufficient to find the wherewithal to pay the taxes, the tax farmer must have his cut too. Attributing the farming to the highest bidder puts a further turn on the screw. Furthermore all revenue had to be extracted from territories the Turks had not occupied. And from what they had left, Alexios sheared off great tracts, donating to relatives and a few favoured others not only whole provinces, but their fiscal revenues. The best documented is presumably the gift to St Christodoulos of the island of Patmos, which had become a little principality where the emperor's officials were not even

1092 or beginning 1093 ... He reappears as *doux* of Cyprus in February 1099 and in September of the same year. But in 1102/3 the *doux* was Constantine Katakalon Euphorbenos, and the anonymous *doux* of 1103 and after February 1105 could be Constantine, Eumathios or someone else. At all events, round about 1109/10 he was put in command of the district of Attaleia, so was apparently away from Cyprus at the time of Nicholas's resignation. He reappears, however, occupying this post, in 1111/12. In conclusion, the excessively patchy information at our disposal does not allow us to evaluate the length of Mouzalon's episcopate on Cyprus, which has been unduly reduced by some scholars to only two or three years'.

authorised to set foot. Nor was Christodoulos content with the island, including its fiscal revenue: he obtained tax exemption for the monastery's shipping, which was required to supply the monastery with necessaries, but also had considerable commercial activity.

Mouzalon, on arriving in Cyprus, had immediately got down to his duties. The first thing he did was to give a dressing-down to a suffragan who was a vocal supporter of the new order. The suffragan promptly reported to the governor (l. 356), who 'breathing fury and scattering insults' threatened to 'collect like eggs all that belonged to the archbishopric and hold the churches for nestlings. And so he did. O justice, you sleep'.

A second suffragan caught his eye. This man had forsaken his duties and spent his days at the governor's court, as well as the better part of the night, leading the singing at the dinner table, punctuating it with unseemly yells, snapping his fingers and beating time with his feet. Mouzalon suspended him (421). The governor restored him to his church.

A third was deprived of orders and excommunicated.[27] 'He departed, judged and rightly condemned. A new man received his see'. But 'armed with power' (ὁπλίσας ἐξουσίᾳ, 477) the governor restored him to power in the church (ἐξουσιαστὴν αὖθις...τῶν πραγμάτων τίθησι τῆς ἐκκλησίας, 479).

Then there was the distressing affair of the monk. He had, in the past, turned hermit to avoid the dangers of Gomorrha, and now he takes up with a prostitute (female) and enlists in the army of the 'tax-grabbing caesar':

> I tried to get this lost sheep away, in hopes of restoring him to the fold and snatching him from the jaws of death. But one of those who know nothing of justice, those who are bent on rapine and destruction [etc], fell suddenly on those who were leading away my nursling, took him from them, saying that they ought to be whipped. Thereupon I went to the archbandit satrap, the then governor of Cyprus, with words of compassion, to ask for my child—the more fool I, pouring out wine to a frog...Anyway, I approached as a suppliant, like old Chryses:

[27] Mouzalon, *Paraitesis*, 448-450, ed. Doanidou, 124-125: ἦρε τὴν παλιὰν κατάραν | εἰσδῦσαν ἐν τοῖς ὀστέοις | χεθεῖσαν ὡς ὕδωρ τε μέχρις ἐγκάτων.

> 'Respect, said I, an old man, an ambassador, a priest [etc]'. But that is not the way to soften hearts of stone. Godly words are goads to evil doers. He paid no attention to what I was saying. He closed his ears, but he opened his mouth. 'Keep away', said he, from an enlisted man. It is not in your interest to carry off initiates. You are no friend of Caesar's draining away his supplies.[28]

By 1110 Mouzalon had had enough. He resigned as archbishop, bade Cyprus adieu and entered a monastery. Presumably he had kept Alexios informed, for he writes:

> I hung on, expecting support from the ruler, as the gift from Zion of a rod to strengthen me—me, the nodding shepherd, careless of my flock, who failed to fill the hungry sheep, who led them neither to water nor grass—hoping the Master [of the herds] would send the shepherd a sling and some stones to keep off the distant wolves and a rod for the near ones.[29]

It looks as if the new order, the empire of the clan, was not only the empire in the sole interests of a small minority, but also bent on its own destruction. Going back to Basil II, in the immediate future the central power would still hold sway, thanks largely to the set-back some of the most prominent families had just received. Nonetheless, the dynamics are programmed for the central power to decrease and the remote forces to increase. When we reach Alexios's day, the 'power at the centre' is no longer at the centre, but depends on being *gambros* with the whole aristocracy, and paying the price this implies. Some brief recoveries, a little holding of creditors at bay, prolonged apparent survival over three long and not unspectacular reigns, but that was the end; the dog-fights for the inheritance finished a job already far gone.

[28] Mouzalon, *Paraitesis*, 521-576, ed. Doanidou, 126-127.

[29] Mouzalon, *Paraitesis*, 742-750, ed. Doanidou, 132.

7

Innovations in government

Paul Magdalino

Michael Angold has written, 'There is no point in talking about a Komnenian "revolution in government"'.[1] To the extent that medieval monarchs, especially Byzantine emperors, were not revolutionaries, this statement is unexceptionable. Angold has presented a compelling picture of Alexios hurtling from crisis to crisis, from expedient to expedient, making it up as he went along.[2] Equally compelling is Paul Lemerle's judgement that his was the ultra-conservative vision of a military man and a family man.[3] It is easy and convenient to see Alexios as a social and intellectual reactionary, who put paid to the two most promising developments of the eleventh century: the social mobility of the city populace, and the tendency of the church towards greater liberation from the state.

And yet Alexios presided over a transformation of Byzantine society which made the Byzantium of 1118-1453 recognisably different from that of Romilly Jenkins's 'imperial centuries'.[4] In some

This paper and my other contribution to the volume were written in the expectation that they would appear before two publications in which I refer to them : P. Magdalino, *The empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180* (Cambridge, 1993); P. Magdalino, 'Justice and finance in the Byzantine state, ninth to twelfth centuries', *Law and society in Byzantium: ninth-twelfth centuries*, ed. A.E. Laiou and D. Simon (Washington, DC, 1994), 93-115. To avoid compounding overlap with overkill, I have refrained from further cross-reference.

[1] M. Angold, *The Byzantine empire 1025-1204. A political history* (London, 1984), 133.

[2] Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 106-148, esp. 128.

[3] P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Le monde byzantin, Paris, 1977), 293-312, esp. 298-299.

[4] R. Jenkins, *Byzantium. The imperial centuries, AD 610-1071* (London, 1966).

ways, the transformation happened in spite of him: the continuing expansion of the rural economy, urban life, literary culture, and church influence are cases in point. In other ways, Alexios actively influenced the process. Another article in this volume looks at a piece of legislation which confirmed the rising cultural profile of the Great Church.[5] This paper addresses some other aspects of Alexios's government which illustrate its drastic nature. From a general consideration of the nature and implications of the regime which he instituted, I shall go on to examine two specific measures: the creation of the new ministerial post of logothete of the sekreta, and the re-foundation of the *Orphanotropheion*. I shall then, in conclusion, briefly discuss their significance in the wider context of Alexios's administrative reforms.

The family regime

A fair amount has now been written about Alexios's reliance on his inner and extended family, and his restructuring of the imperial system of rewards and honours.[6] Yet one cannot too often stress the novelty of what emerged. Rewards and honours were

[5] Magdalino, 'The reform edict of 1107', below, 199-218.

[6] H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIe-XVe siècles* (Paris, 1966), 204-205; A. Hohlweg, *Beiträge zur Verwaltungsgeschichte des oströmischen Reiches unter den Komnenen* (MiscByzMonac, 1, Munich, 1965), 15-40; A.P. Kazhdan, *Sotsialnyi sostav gospodsvuyushchego klassa Vizantii, XI-XIIvv* (Moscow, 1974); Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 298-299; N. Oikonomides, 'L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au XIe siècle (1025-1118)', *TM*, 6 (1976), 125-152, esp. 126-128, 151-152; P. Magdalino, 'Aspects of twelfth-century Byzantine Kaiserkritik', *Speculum*, 58 (1983), 326-346; repr. P. Magdalino, *Tradition and transformation in medieval Byzantium* (London, 1991), VIII; Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 102-106, 126, 133-134; M.F. Hendy, 'Byzantium, 1081-1204: the economy revisited, twenty years on', *The economy, fiscal administration and coinage of Byzantium* (Northampton, 1989), III. The details of the Komnenian family system can now be studied with the aid of two invaluable prosopographical works: D.I. Polemis, *The Doukai: a contribution to Byzantine Prosopography* (London, 1968); K. Barzos (Βαρζός). *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, 2 vols (Thessalonike, 1984). These works, especially the genealogical table in Barzos, should be consulted for all names mentioned below for which citations are not provided. B. Skoulatos, *Les personnages byzantins de l'Alexiade* (Louvain, 1980), also provides useful biographical notices of all figures mentioned in the *Alexiad*.

not the icing on the cake of government, but, as Psellos, Kekaumenos, and Anna all recognised, the essence of government.[7] Kinship and lordship had always been features of imperial government, but Alexios, so to speak, built them into the constitution. He not only, by his extended use of the title *sebastos* and his grants of resources, gave his kin a formal share in the style and substance of imperial power, thus creating a new princely nobility; he also made imperial kinship the basis of hierarchy. There was still a hierarchy of titles, which could still **denote** seniority, but seniority at the Komnenian court was **determined** by degree of kinship with the emperor, to the point that by Manuel's reign kinship designations—ἀνεψιός, ἐξάδελφος, γαμβρός, of the emperor—often took the place of titles. So did the surnames Komnenos and Doukas, and, much later, Palaiologos.[8]

The following are other significant aspects of the regime:

1 The contrast between the Komnenian system and that of the last major imperial dynasty

It is instructive to compare Alexios with the two greatest 'Macedonians', Basil I and Basil II. Basil I crowned three of his

[7] Michael Psellos, *Χρονογραφία*, VI.29, VII.2, ed. E. Renauld (Paris, 1926-8; repr. 1967), I, 134; II, 83. Kekaumenos, *Στρατηγικόν*, ed. G.G Litavrin, *Sovety i rasskazy Kekavmena* (*Cecaumeni Consilia et Narrationes*) (Moscow, 1972):, 278; Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, II.iv.2-3, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols (Paris, 1937-45), I, 114-5, tr. E.R.A. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1988), 112.

[8] The main sources for the ranking system are the synodal lists of 1094, 1157, 1166, and 1170: see P. Gautier, 'Le synode des Blachernes (fin 1094). Étude prosopographique', *REB*, 29 (1971), 213-284 (text, 216-21); *PG*, 140, 177-180; S.N. Sakkos, *Ὁ Πατήρ μου μείζων μου ἐστί* (Thessalonike, 1968), I, 141-142, 153-155; S.N. Sakkos, 'Ἡ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει σύνοδος τοῦ 1170', *Θεολογικὸν Συμπόσιον. Χαριστήριον εἰς τὸν Καθηγητὴν Παναγιώτην Κ. Χρήστου* (Thessalonike, 1967), 332-3, 341-2. Cf. L. Stiernon, 'Notes de titulature et de prosopographie byzantines', *REB*, 19 (1961), 273-283; 21 (1963), 179-198; 22 (1964), 184-198; 23 (1965), 222-243. More generally on social status, imperial descent and family name, see R. Macrides, 'What's in the name Megas Komnenos?', *Ἀρχεῖον Πόντου*, 35 (1979), 238-245; P. Magdalino, 'Byzantine snobbery', *The Byzantine aristocracy, IX to XIII Centuries*, ed. M. Angold (BAR Int. Ser., 221, Oxford, 1984), 58-78 (repr. *Tradition and transformation*, I); D.M. Nicol, 'The prosopography of the Byzantine aristocracy', *The Byzantine aristocracy*, ed. Angold, 79-91.

sons, but confined his daughters to a convent.[9] Basil II never married, and worked entirely through his household eunuchs; of these, only one, Basil the *parakoimomenos*, was a kinsman, and he did not last long.[10] Alexios crowned only one of his sons—and this remained Komnenian practice—but gave the others substantial consolation prizes in the titles of *sebastokrator*, caesar, and *panhypersebastos*. All his sisters and daughters were used to build up the connections of the Komnenoi with other aristocratic families. Alexios made similar use of his nephews, nieces and grandchildren, notably the children of his brother Isaac: Zonaras specifies that Alexios arranged their marriages after Isaac's death.[11] The roll-call of the Komnenian in-laws by the end of the reign is impressive: Doukas (x4), Diogenes, Melissenos, Taronites, Botaneiates (x2), Bryennios, Kourtikios, Katakalon, Euphorbenos, Dokeianos, Synadenos. This excludes the failed connections (Gabras, Iasites) and those where the marriage cannot be precisely identified (Kamytzes, Philokales, Tatikios). The list can also be greatly extended if one treats the Doukai as part of the core imperial family, and not as part of the affinity. This is not to mention marriage alliances with foreign dynasties, although one may note in passing that at least two, possibly all three, of Alexios's sons, and both his grandsons by Anna Komnene, made foreign marriages. The pattern under Alexios and John was one of Komnenian males marrying foreign females; it was not until Manuel's reign that princesses were raised for export.[12]

[9] Sons: see P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the coins in the Dumbarton Oaks collection and in the Whittemore collection*, III (Washington, DC, 1973), 474-475. Daughters: Theophanes Continuatus, ed. E. Weber (CSHB, Bonn, 1838), 264.

[10] Psellos, *Chronographia*, I. 3, 19-21, 28, 30, ed. Renauld, I, 3, 12-13, 19. Cf. W.G. Brokaar, 'Basil Lacapenus', *Studia Byzantina et neohellenica Neerlandica* (Leiden, 1972), 199-234; M.F. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine monetary economy, c. 300-1450* (Cambridge, 1985), 572.

[11] John Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ ἱστορίων*, XVIII.24.13, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst (CHSB, Bonn, 1897), III, 746-747.

[12] Cf. R. Macrides, 'Dynastic marriages and political kinship', *Byzantine Diplomacy, papers from the twenty-fifth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990*, ed. J. Shepard and S. Franklin (SPBS, 1, Aldershot, 1992), 263-280.

2 The private conception of the state,
summed up in Zonaras's statement that Alexios 'treated the palace as his own home, and called it that'.[13] Zonaras had an axe to grind, and one can easily exaggerate Alexios's originality in adopting a household model of government. But the remark probably does express an essential truth about Alexios: he did not let himself get taken over by the staff, the mystique, and the traditions of the palace, but continued to do things as they were done in aristocratic households. Aristocratic and imperial household practice were no doubt similar on many points, but they clearly differed on the important matter of inheritance: whereas aristocrats followed private law in dividing their property among their heirs, emperors passed on an undivided empire to one successor. The Komnenoi were no exception, and yet the accessions of John and Manuel were marked by considerable rivalry between the designated heir and one of his siblings. John went even further than Alexios in looking after the sons who were excluded from the succession: he made all of them *sebastokratores*, and he considered creating a quasi-independent appanage for Manuel.[14] Might all this not reflect a mentality which tended to regard the empire as the property of the imperial family **as a whole**, and not just as the public responsibility of the designated emperor?

3 The role of women
It is hard to escape the impression that Alexios's family policy was shaped decisively by the two strong women in his life, his mother and his wife, not to mention his temporary stepmother, Maria of Alania.[15] Lemerle is surely right in describing him as 'faible devant les femmes'.[16] His mother, Anna Dalassene, held the family together for fourteen crucial years from her husband's death in 1067

[13] Zonaras, XVIII. 29. 22-23, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 766.
[14] Niketas Choniates, *Χρονικὴ διήγησις*, ed. J.-L. van Dieten (CFHB, 11/1, Berlin and New York, 1975), 16; John Kinnamos, *Ἐπιτομὴ τῶν κατορθωμάτων*, I.10, ed. A. Meineke (CSHB, Bonn, 1836), 23.
[15] Cf. M. Mullett, 'The "disgrace" of the ex-basilissa Maria', *BS*, 45 (1984), 202-211; R. Macrides, 'Kinship by arrangement: The case of adoption', *DOP*, 44 (1990), 196.
[16] Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 298.

to her son's *coup d'état*. During that time she arranged many of the marriage connections which helped to make that coup successful. All the evidence suggests that Alexios was extremely deferential to his mother, even when he came to resent the powerful position into which he had put her as head of the civil administration. Anna and Zonaras also both indicate, in their different ways, that after her retirement from public life her place was taken by Eirene Doukaina.[17] Is it sexist to see a woman's touch in the Komnenian obsession with kin? One thinks of the power of a mother's curse evoked in *Digenes Akrites*;[18] one also thinks of the contrast between the monastic *typikon* of Eirene Doukaina, who shows concern only for her family, and those of her sons John and Isaac, who are concerned to commemorate their servants and retainers.[19]

4 The Doukai
Perhaps the most telling point that can be made against the matriarchal theory just put forward is the role of Alexios's grandfather-in-law, the caesar John Doukas. Alexios's coup might not have gone so smoothly without the caesar's help. He had as strong a sense of family as did Anna Dalassene—which is one reason why

[17] *Al.*, XII.iii.2-7, L, III, 60-62, S, 374-376; Zonaras, XVIII. 24, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 747-748.
[18] *Digenes Akrites*, ed. J. Mavrogordato (Oxford, 1956), I.70ff, 110-12, 138, 259-60; II.98, 228ff.
[19] Compare *KecharitomeneTyp*, *Τυπικὸν τῆς σεβασμίας μονῆς τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς Κεχαριτωμένης τῆς ἐκ βάθρων νεουργηθείσης καὶ συστάσης παρὰ τῆς εὐσεβεστάτης αὐγούστης κυρᾶς Εἰρήνης τῆς Δουκαίνης κατὰ τὴν αὐτῆς πρόσταξιν καὶ γνώμην ὑφηγηθέν τε καὶ ἐκτεθέν*, 55-57 and chs 4, 71, 74, 79, ed. P. Gautier, 'Le typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitômènè', *REB*, 43 (1985), 21-23, 37-38, 119-125, 131-133, 137-147, with *PantokratorTyp*, *Τυπικὸν τῆς βασιλικῆς μονῆς τοῦ Παντοκράτορος*, lines 246-253, ed. P. Gautier, 'Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantokrator', *REB*, 32 (1974), 45, and *Kosmosoteira-Typ*, *Τυπικὸν ἐμοῦ τοῦ σεβαστοκράτορος Ἰσαακίου καὶ υἱοῦ βασιλέως κυροῦ Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ ἐπὶ τῷ καινισθέντι παρ' ἡμῶν νεοσυστάτῳ μοναστηρίῳ κατὰ τὴν πεντεκαιδεκάτην ἰνδικτιῶνα τοῦ ἑξακισχιλιοστοῦ ἑξακοσιοστοῦ ἑξηκοστοῦ ἔτους, ἐν ᾧ καὶ καθίδρυται τὸ τῆς κοσμοσωτείρας μου καὶ θεομήτορος καὶ ἐν πολλοῖς εὐεργέτιδος διὰ μουσείου εἰκόνισμα*, chs. 12, 54, 69, 86, 107, 117, ed. L. Petit, 'Typikon du monastère de la Kosmosotira près d'Aenos (1152)', *IRAIK*, 13 (1908), 10, 30, 36-37, 45-46, 53-54, 58.

she hated him so.[20] He formed a link between the short-lived Doukas attempt to establish a new imperial dynasty, and the more successful Komnenian attempt. Thanks to him, the Doukai not only provided an example for the Komnenian regime, but participated in it on an almost equal basis.[21]

5 The role of the family in administration

The Komnenian family and their affinity were largely a military aristocracy, and it was primarily in the military sphere that Alexios was served by his relatives. The notable exceptions, however, were the family members to whom he felt closest: his brother Isaac and his mother. Isaac seems to have had a loosely defined role as judge, security chief, and inquisitor. He was closely involved in the requisitioning of sacred valuables (1082), the trials of John Italos, Leo of Chalcedon, and Basil the Bogomil, and the unmasking of the Anemas conspiracy.[22] An imperial ruling of 1082 refers to his judicial tribunal.[23] Alexios put his mother, as is well known, in charge of the civil administration. The terms of her appointment are set out in the famous chrysobull quoted in the *Alexiad*, and her activity in this role is illustrated by documents of the 1080s.[24] Here I should like to look at two specific points arising from the chrysobull.

(a) The repeated statement that all the empress-mother's decisions are to stand, 'whether justified or unjustified' (κἂν εὔλογοι κἂν

[20] Nikephoros Bryennios, *Ὕλη ἱστορίας*, III.6, ed. P. Gautier, *Nicephori Bryennii historiarum libri quattuor* (CFHB, 9, Brussels, 1975), 221; *Al.*, III.ii.1,3, L, I, 106, 107, S, 105, 106. Perhaps at the caesar's instigation, and perhaps not without cause, Anna had been accused of complicity with Romanos Diogenes in 1071: Bryennios, I.22, ed. Gautier, 128-131.

[21] See, for example, the high commands given to Eirene's brothers Michael and John (Polemis, nos. 24-25), and the sentiments expressed in the 'spurious' preface to Bryennios's history, ed. Gautier, 55-71.

[22] Skoulatos, *Les personnages*, 124-130.

[23] Coll. IV, Nov.XXI: Zepos, *JGR*, I, 289.

[24] Patmos, nos. 47, 49, ed. E. Vranoussi, *Βυζαντινὰ ἔγγραφα τῆς μονῆς Πάτμου*, I, *Αὐτοκρατορικά* (Athens, 1980), 331-335, 342-351;, no. 2, Docheiariou, no. 2, ed. N. Oikonomides,*Actes de Docheiariou* (Archives de l'Athos, 13, Paris, 1984), 54-59.

ἀνεύλογοι...κἂν εὔλογα κἂν παράλογα). The formula was to enjoy great currency in the early years of Manuel I, who used it in his sweeping privileges for the church. It was tantamount to granting an immunity from legal liability, and it caused Manuel's administration a great deal of trouble. Svoronos saw it as something unique to Manuel's legislation, but its occurrence in the chrysobull of 1081 shows that Alexios set the precedent.[25]

(b) The Logothete of the Sekreta. Alexios's chrysobull for his mother refers to the activity of an official called the προεστὼς τῶν σεκρέτων, or λογοθέτης τῶν σεκρέτων, whose office is also attested independently in July 1081.[26] Nicolas Oikonomides has put forward the very plausible suggestion that the office was created by Alexios in order to assist his mother.[27] Oikonomides insists that the measure was not a formalisation of the hitherto informal position of *mesazon* or *paradynasteuon* ('grand vizier' or 'prime minister'), but quite the opposite: rather than the head of the government, the logothete was the technical co-ordinator of services, who reported to the empress-mother and took orders from her. This was undoubtedly the original function of the office. But did it remain so? Let us look at the list of known logothetes from Alexios's reign.[28]

1 (1083) Sergios Hexamilites, *protoproedros*.

2 (1088) anonymous, *megalepiphanestatos protonobelissimos*.

3 (1089) anonymous, possibly the same.

[25] *Al.*, III.vi.6, 8, L, I, 122, S, 118. Cf. Zepos, *JGR*, I, 385; N. Svoronos, 'Les privilèges de l'église à l'époque des Comnènes: un rescrit inédit de Manuel Ier Comnène', *TM*, 1 (1965), 326, 333-334, repr. N. Svoronos, *Études sur l'organisation intérieure, la société et l'économie de l'empire byzantin* (London, 1973), VII. The Alexian precedent prompts a reconsideration of the date and authorship of the imperial *lysis* published by Svoronos: see below, n. 49.

[26] *Al.*, III.vi.6, 8, L, I, 122, S, 118; *Actes de Lavra*, I, *Des origines à 1204*, no.43.63, ed. P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos and D. Papachryssanthou (Archives de l'Athos, 5, Paris, 1970), 240.

[27] Oikonomides, 'L'évolution', 132-133.

[28] See Gautier, 'Le synode des Blachernes', 237-238.

4 (c. 1090) Michael, *sebastos*, about whom quite a lot is known. He was a *gambros* of Alexios through marriage to the em peror's niece, besides being quite distinguished in his own right as the son of a *sebastos*, Constantine, a nephew of the patriarch Michael Keroularios. He had been *megas droungarios*, i.e. a senior judge, earlier in his career. In 1090 he commissioned a survey of the civil legislation excerpted in the *Nomokanon*. In 1107-8 he was ordered to carry out the fiscal survey of the theme of Thessalonike—an unusual task for a central official and probably to be explained by the fact that Alexios himself was in the west for the whole of that year.[29]

5 (post 1109, probably post 1112) Andronikos Doukas, *sebastos*. The names and the title strongly suggest a nephew of the empress Eirene, possibly a son of her sister Anna. He is probably identical with the man of the same name who was *doux* and *praitor* of Thessalonike in 1112.[30]

6 (before August 1118) Gregory Kamateros, a former imperial secretary who in his bureaucratic rise had held the important judicial post of *protasekretis*: Theodore Prodromos praised him for his legal expertise.[31] He married into the Doukas family, and Choniates implies that it was after this illustrious imperial marriage that he became logothete.[32]

[29] *Lavra*, I, no. 58.24-25, ed. Lemerle, Svoronos, Guillou and Papachryssanthou, 303; Barzos, no. 20.

[30] *Docheiariou*, no 3.10, ed. Oikonomides, 67; cf. *Xenophontos*, no 3, ed. D. Papachryssanthou, *Actes de Xénophon* (Archives de l'Athos, 15, Paris, 1986), 82; Polemis, nos 27, 136, *The Doukai*, 74-75, 154.

[31] Theophylact, ep. 127, ed. P. Gautier, *Théophylacte d'Achrida*, II, *Lettres* (CFHB, 16/2, Thessalonike, 1986), 73-9, and Gautier, *Théophylacte*, II, 571; A. Majuri, 'Anecdota Prodromea dal Vat.gr.305', *Rendiconti della reale Accademia dei Lincei, classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, 5th ser., 17 (1908), 530.

[32] Niketas Choniates, ed. van Dieten, 9.

What this list shows is that the office of *logothetes ton sekreton* saw, in the ten years after its creation, a dramatic rise in the social status of its incumbent. From c. 1090 until the end of Alexios's reign, the logothete was an imperial relative with a high degree of fiscal experience and legal expertise. It is hard to believe that the office did not correspondingly gain in power and responsibility. Indeed, given Alexios's increasing impatience with his mother's administrative stranglehold—recorded by Zonaras, and discernible in a Docheiariou document of 1089[33]—one can see that it might have suited his purposes to appoint, c. 1090, a logothete better capable of standing up to Anna Dalassene. Certainly, after her death there was nothing to prevent the logothete from becoming more of a 'prime minister'. Whether this is actually what he became or remained is another matter, which is greatly complicated by the difficulty of tracing the office in the period 1118-1185.[34] Given the particular qualifications of three of the individuals (nos. 4-6) listed above, I am inclined to see the logothete as a supreme judge in fiscal affairs, and thus to regard him as identical with the προκαθήμενος/καθολικός τῶν δημοσιακῶν πραγμάτων who appears in sources of the mid-twelfth century as the head of one of the chief judicial tribunals.[35] If I am right, Alexios was responsible for a significant innovation which has gone completely unnoticed: he was the first emperor to create a judicial tribune which specialised in fiscal lawsuits but yet was theoretically separate from the fiscal sekreta.

[33] Zonaras, XVIII.24.9-10, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 746; *Docheiariou*, no 2, ed. Oikonomides, 58-59.

[34] The title *logothetes ton sekreton* is not attested during this period. However, a προεστὼς τῶν σεκρέτων is mentioned in 1176 (*Patmos*, no 22.13, ed. Vranoussi), and the title μέγας λογοθέτης, by which the office was known after 1185, is attested in 1164: S. Eustratiades, 'Τυπικὸν τῆς ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει μονῆς του 'Αγίου Μεγαλομάρτυρος Μάμαντος', *Ἑλληνικά*, 1 (1928), 308.

[35] *Ecloga Basilicorum*, B.9.1.91: ed. L. Burgmann (Frankfurt, 1988), 376; R. Macrides, 'Justice under Manuel I Komnenos: four novels on court business and murder', *Fontes Minores*, 6 (1985), 138, 181-182.

The *Orphanotropheion*

This[36] was, on the face of it, more an act of conventional piety than an innovation in government. It nevertheless deserves consideration in the present context because it represents the one large-scale re-allocation of resources that Alexios arranged outside his family. There are four sources for the foundation as such. By far the most important is Anna, who gives a lengthy description.[37] The complex was situated near the acropolis point, near an old church of St Paul. It was big, like a city within a city, covering several square stades. Its main feature was a κύκλος of two-storey buildings which housed the old and infirm, with the severely disabled occupying the ground floor. There were thousands of inmates, with at least one member of staff per patient. This vast population was sustained by revenues which the emperor granted 'by land and sea'; whenever he happened upon a particularly choice domain, he made it over to the 'brethren'. The complex was administered by an important dignitary, the *Orphanotrophos*, who had several *sekreta* under him. He and his staff were strictly accountable for the institution's finances, which were guaranteed by imperial chrysobull.

In addition to this, the emperor provided for a large clergy and ample lighting at the church of St Paul (here also called the church of the Apostles), along with choirs of both men and women—Anna refers to the latter as deaconesses.[38] Alexios also built a convent for Georgian nuns, to the left of the church as one entered the precinct. To the right of it he established a grammar school for orphan children of every race.

[36] See in general R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, I. *Le siège de Constantinople et le Patriarcat oecuménique*, III, *Les églises et les monastères*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1969), 399-400, 567-568; Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 283-284 and bibliography; T.S. Miller, 'The Orphanotropheion of Constantinople', *Through the eye of a needle: Judeo-Christian roots of social welfare*, ed. E.A. Hanawalt and C. Lindberg (Kirksville, Missouri, 1994), 83-104. For the leper hospital connected with the *Orphanotropheion*, see M. Aubineau, 'Zoticos de Constantinople, nourricier des pauvres et serviteur des lépreux', *AnalBoll*, 93 (1975), 67-108, esp. 84, 95ff. repr. M. Aubineau, *Chrysostome, Sévérien, Proclus, Hésychius et alii: Patristique et hagiographie grecques* (London, 1988).

[37] *Al.*, XV.vii.3-9, L, III, 213-218, S, 492-496.

[38] According to Theodore Balsamon (à propos of canon 15 of Chalcedon: Rhalles-Potles, Σύνταγμα, II, 255-6), 'no deaconess is ordained today, even though certain of the ἀσκήτριαι are incorrectly called *diakonissai*'. It is not clear whether *asketriai* here refers to nuns in general, or to the specialised group of women who in the sixth century acted as professional mourners at public funerals: Justinian, *Nov.*59.

Zonaras's account is much shorter, but it adds some important details.[39] It mentions that the foundation was not only a renewal of an old institution, but also the centralisation of several other redundant γηροκομεῖα, homes for the aged, whose properties Alexios now made over to the *Orphanotropheion* together with those which he donated. Zonaras further states that the monastic population included men as well as women, that the school catered for children of poor parents as well as orphans, and that the teachers (Zonaras mentions both *didaskaloi* and *paidagogoi*) were paid from the endowment. In addition, Zonaras's account is interesting for its rather ominous comment that the *Orphanotropheion* 'is still preserved', and for its rough indication of a date some time in the 1090s. This chronology can be narrowed on the basis of another mid twelfth-century source, the *Life of St Cyril Phileotes*, which mentions the Orphanage in the context of a visit which Alexios paid to the saint between 1091 and 1096.[40]

Finally, mention should be made of the details given in the *Chronicle* of the Sathas Anonymous, usually identified with Theodore Skoutariotes. Although a late thirteenth-century compilation, this draws on good and otherwise lost sources for Alexios's reign. Besides confirming that the *Orphanotropheion* catered for thousands, the chronicle mentions the school and **four** celibate institutions, one male and three female, here distinguishing a σεμνεῖον γυναικῶν, a παρθενών or ἀσκητήριον, and the convent for Georgian nuns.[41]

[39] Zonaras, XVIII.24.1-2, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 744-745.

[40] Nicholas Kataskepenos, *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία καὶ μερικὴ θαυμάτων διήγησις τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Κυρίλλου τοῦ Φιλεώτου*, ed. E. Sargologos, *La vie de Saint Cyrille le Philéote, moine byzantin (†1110)* (SubsHag, 39, Brussels, 1964), 230.

[41] Sathas, *MB*, VII, 177-178; the *asketerion* would seem to tie up with Anna's reference to *diakonissai* (see above, nn.37, 38).

As always, we must begin by taking the piety of the founder at its face value. Alexios had much on his conscience that he needed to expiate: the violence of his takeover in 1081; his requisitioning of sacred property in 1082; the plight of all the unfortunates who had been ruined, bereaved, displaced or injured in recent wars; and perhaps most importantly, the criticism which his excessive generosity to his family had attracted from at least one leading churchman.[42] This criticism was made at the height of the Pecheneg crisis in 1090-1, and it may therefore be plausible to see the *Orphanotropheion* as a fulfilment of a vow to make amends if God called off his punishing hordes.

At the same time, as always, we have to recognise that a foundation like the *Orphanotropheion* had a political value. Its beneficiaries—whoever they were—were in a sense the emperor's clients. Much of its wealth was recycled from other religious institutions, the defunct *gerokomeia*. It is not clear how many foundations were affected, but their collective wealth must have been considerable. They may have included the Myrelaion, whose fate is uncertain after 1089.[43] At any rate, it cannot be purely fortuitous that the foundation of the *Orphanotropheion* appears to coincide chronologically with the retirement of Anna Dalassene, and with the thorough rationalisation of state finances that Alexios conducted in the early to mid-1090s—a rationalisation which involved the

[42] See P. Gautier, 'Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite contre Alexis Ier Comnène', *REB*, 28 (1970), 5-55, esp. 27 (the empire's military reverses), 29 (Alexios's violent seizure of power, and misplaced faith in material strength), 31-33 (fiscal oppression, especially of the church), 35 (God's punishment), 41 (extravagance of the imperial relatives), 43ff. 53-55 (prayers without just and merciful taxation are of no avail).

[43] *Patmos*, no. 52.125, ed. M. Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, *Βυζαντινὰ ἔγγραφα τῆς μονῆς Πάτμου*, II. *Δημοσίων λειτουργῶν* (Athens, 1980), 130. Cf. I, no.47, 334, for the signatures of seven officials of the *sekreton* of the Myrelaion, including one βασιλικὸς νοτάριος τοῦ γηροτροφείου. For the Myrelaion, see Janin, *Églises*, 351-354, and Oikonomides, 'L'évolution', 139, n. 88; see also Janin, 552ff, for a list of *gerokomeia* in Constantinople. The foundation is mentioned in the *Ecloga Basilicorum* of c. 1142 (ad. B.5.2.1, ed. Burgmann, 192), but in a passage which incorporates older material (cf. *Peira*, 15.12: ed. Zepos, *JGR*, IV, 53).

creation of a new post, that of the *megas logariastes ton euagon sekreton*, to oversee the 'pious houses' of the crown.[44]

The status of the Orphanage as an institution that was both sacred and imperial is clearly illustrated in a juridical ruling (*semeioma*) of Alexios that has recently come to light.[45] The emperor upheld the foundation's evidently dubious title to a certain vineyard on the grounds that the *sekreton* of the *Orphanotropheion* was doubly privileged; being both a 'pious house' (εὐαγὴς οἶκος) and an 'imperial house' (βασιλικὸς οἶκος),[46] it enjoyed, on the one hand, the privileges conferred by Justinianic legislation on the church,[47] and, on the other hand, those confirmed to the fisc by Basil II.[48] This convenient ambivalence is reflected in the prosopography of the *Orphanotrophoi* during the twelfth century: they include monks, clerics and laymen as well as one man, Alexios Aristenos, who combined ecclesiastical and imperial office.[49] The

[44] Oikonomides, 'L'évolution', 140-1; Hendy, *Monetary economy*, 513-517; Hendy, *Economy*, III, 35ff.

[45] V. Tiftixoglu and Sp. Troianos, 'Unbekannte Kaiserurkunden und Basilikentestimonia aus dem Sinaiticus 1117', *Fontes Minores*, 9 (1993), 143-144.

[46] On these terms, see, in addition to Oikonomides, 'L'évolution', 138-139, M. Kaplan, 'Maisons impériales et fondations pieuses: réorganisation de la fortune impériale et assistance publique de la fin du VIIIe à le fin du Xe siècle', *B*, 61 (1991), 441-464.

[47] I.e. either novel 111 or 131 (B.5.2.14 or B.5.3.7).

[48] I.e. in the novel of 996 (Coll.III.29, §4), ed. Zepos, *JGR*, I, 269-270; new ed. N. Svoronos (†) and P. Gounaridis, *Les novelles des empereurs Macédoniens concernant la terre et les stratiotes* (Athens, 1994), 213.

[49] For Aristenos and the Hagiotheodorites brothers, see below, p. 168 and nn. 58-59. Apart from Michael Hagiotheodorites, the most highly placed lay *Orphanotrophos* of the period appears to have been John Belissariotes, the brother-in-law of Nicetas Choniates: ed. J.-L. van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae orationes et epistulae* (CFHB, 3, Berlin/New York, 1972), 154-155; cf. J.-L. van Dieten, *Niketas Choniates, Erläuterungen zu den Reden und Briefen nebst einer Biographie* (Berlin/New York, 1971), 155-159. The two known monk *Orphanotrophoi* are Metrophanes, who requested a *lysis* from Alexios (ed. Tiftixoglu and Troianos, 'Unbekannte Kaiserurkunden', 146) and Basil Anzas, addressee of an imperial *lysis* which Svoronos (above, n. 25) attributes to Manuel and dates to 1171, but this date needs reconsideration in view of the likelihood that Michael Hagiotheodorites was still alive at the time and had been *Orphanotrophos* in 1170: see Magdalino, *Empire*, 256-257, 509.

Orphanotropheion thus enabled Alexios to extract the maximum patronage and publicity value from sacred property which, being sacred, could not legitimately be kept by the fisc or handed over to laymen. The same consideration may have applied to many of the properties which Alexios 'donated' to the foundation. We know, for example, that he endowed it with three estates that had formerly belonged to the Great Lavra.[50] The Lavra had been compensated, but the emperor may have felt embarrassed about holding on to property that had been dedicated to God.

The publicity value of the *Orphanotropheion* lay partly in the fact that in founding it, Alexios conformed, in a very spectacular way, to a traditional imperial type—the type of emperor that the church and people of Constantinople most admired, but so far had sorely missed in Alexios. The foundation was an act of Christlike philanthropy, comparable to the feeding of the five thousand, and an act of imperial renewal, which contributed to the rejuvenation of Constantinople. This raises the question whether Alexios was looking to earlier imperial precedents, for the Orphanage was an ancient institution, founded in the fourth century and favoured by a series of later emperors, notably Leo I and Justin II.[51] A look at the previous history of the institution reveals, in fact, that the *Alexiad* distinctly overstates the originality of Alexios's input. Anna implies that he created everything apart from the church. But from the beginning there must have been some sort of school for the orphans, and Alexios's main contribution was probably to admit poor non-orphans as well. The association of the *diakonissai* or *asketriai* with the foundation is attested in the ninth century, and in all likelihood went back to Justin II.[52] It is also possible that the Georgian convent was added to an already existing church of St

[50] *Lavra*, I, nos. 56, 58, ed. Lemerle, Svoronos, Guillou and Papachryssanthou, 294.

[51] See in general Miller, 'Orphanotropheion'.

[52] *Life of St Anthony the Younger*, ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Pravoslavnij* Palestinskij Sbornik, 19, 3 (1907), 211-212; cf. my remarks in *Constantinople médiévale, Études sur le mutation des structures urbaines* (forthcoming in *TM*, série des monographies).

Nicholas the Iberian, and that even the low-cost housing for the poor and aged was an adaptation of a much older structure.[53]

At the same time, Alexios had another source of inspiration much closer in time and not so distant in place. This was the neighbouring complex of St George at the Mangana, founded by Constantine Monomachos in c. 1045. Like the reconstituted *Orphanotropheion*, this appears to have been a large 'campus', comprising several institutions: a monastery, an old-age home, a poor-house, a hospital and a law school.[54] It is not a little ironic that the closest precedent for Alexios's greatest act of piety was provided by the emperor whose name had come to epitomise the extravagance, the indolence, and the immorality of those eleventh-century 'wet' regimes from which Alexios tried so hard in all other respects to distance himself. However, the main literary descriptions of the two foundations present a revealing contrast. Psellos dwells on the beauty and the extravagance of Constantine's church of the Mangana, while Anna emphasises the size and the philanthropic utility of Alexios's work.[55]

About the organisation of the *Orphanotropheion*, we are completely uninformed. The Pantokrator *Typikon* gives some idea of how such a complex was administered, and how its properties were distributed.[56] It is curious that twelfth- and thirteenth-century sources do not contain more references to its estates; they were evidently not concentrated in those areas from which most of our documentation survives. Apart from those mentioned in the Lavra documents, I have been able to trace only one property, albeit an important one. This is the Pertinentia Girocomion, or ἐπισκέψεις γηροκομειῶν, listed in the '*Partitio Romaniae*' of 1204. From their

[53] Cf. Magdalino, *Constantinople médiévale*.

[54] N. Oikonomides, 'St George of Mangana, Maria Skleraina, and the "Malyj Sion" of Novgorod', *DOP*, 34/5 (1980-1), 239-246.

[55] Psellos, *Chronographia*, VI.185-9, ed. Renauld, II, 61-4; *Al.*, XV.vii.5, L, III, 215, S, 492-493.

[56] *PantokratorTyp*, lines 1-727, ed. P. Gautier, 27-73 (monastery), lines 728-903, ed. Gautier, 73-83 (oratory churches), lines 904-1413, ed. Gautier, 83-113 (hospitals), lines 1446-1576, ed. Gautier, 115-125 (properties).

place on the list, between Berrhoia and Platamon, these domains would seem to have been located in the area of Mt Olympos.[57]

Some idea of the importance of the reconstituted *Orphanotropheion* in twelfth-century Byzantine society can be gained from the following observations:

1 The post of *Orphanotrophos*
was occupied by at least three distinguished and learned individuals: Alexios Aristenos, the canonist and judge; Nicholas Hagiotheodorites, who in the course of his career also became master of the rhetors, nomophylax, and eventually metropolitan of Athens with the title of *hypertimos*; and his brother Michael, who combined the post with that of logothete of the drome, and, in this capacity, was Manuel's 'prime minister' for much of the 1160s and 1170s.[58]

2 Theodore Prodromos
lived and possibly taught at the *Orphanotropheion* for much of his career.[59]

[57] Ed. A. Carile, 'Partitio Terrarum Imperii Romaniae', *Studi Veneziani*, 7 (1965), 221; on *episkepseis/pertinentia*, see Hendy, *Studies*, 89.

[58] For Aristenos, see Macrides, 'Nomos and Kanon', 71-72; for the Hagiotheodorites brothers, see A. Kazhdan, 'Bratia Aiofeodoriti pri dvore Manuila Komnina', *ZbRad*, 9 (1966), 85-94.

[59] This emerges not only from a letter addressed to him by Michael Italikos after 1143, ep. 1, ed. P. Gautier, *Michel Italikos, lettres et discours* (AOC, 14, Paris, 1972), 61.18, but also from a speech which he addressed to Alexios Aristenos, when the latter became *orphanotrophos* for the second time under John II: *PG*, 133, 1268-74; cf. W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos, historische Gedichte* (WByzSt, 11, Vienna, 1974), 460-467. This additional evidence makes it doubly hard to accept the identification of Theodore Prodromos with 'Manganeios Prodromos', most recently proposed by R. Beaton, 'The rhetoric of poverty: the lives and opinions of Theodore Prodromos', *BMGS*, 11 (1987), 21-2. There is nothing to indicate that Prodromos was living in monastic retirement at the *Orphanotropheion*, but much to suggest that he was living and working there during the years when 'Manganeios' was in the service of the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene.

3 The *Ecloga Basilicorum*,
a legal compilation probably dating from 1142, mentions the *Orphanotropheion* in a hypothetical case. The *Orphanotrophos* is envisaged trying to throw a man out of his house for non-payment of the lease, and producing unacceptable documentary proof, which, however, he persuades the judge to accept—by bribery? It is interesting that the *Orphanotropheion* and its director came to mind when constructing this sort of scenario.[60]

4 The free schooling
offered at the *Orphanotropheion* should, in theory, have helped to raise the level of literacy among the poor, and therefore, conceivably, to promote social mobility. One product of such mobility is envisaged in the *Bagoas* of Nikephoros Basilakes, a model prosecution speech in an imaginary case of impiety. Although the incident was probably fictitious, it is realistic to the extent of being unmistakably set in the Great Church of Constantinople in 1147. The character of 'Bagoas', the accused, may well be based on a real colleague of Basilakes. In the present context, it is interesting that 'Bagoas' is portrayed as coming from a very poor, semi-barbarian background, but receiving enough of an education to become a deacon of the Great Church. To me, this looks very much like a reflection of the sort of opportunity that the school at the *Orphanotropheion* provided.[61]

5 The acropolis,
the area of the *Orphanotropheion*, acquired a new ceremonial importance in the twelfth century. When in 1133 John II revived the imperial triumph, the procession went to Hagia Sophia, not from the Golden Gate, as on all previous recorded occasions, but from a

[60] *Ecloga Basilicorum*, B.7.3.23pr. ed. Burgmann, 256-257.

[61] Ed. A. Garzya, *Nicephorus Basilaca, orationes et epistulae* (Leipzig, 1984), 92-110. The topicality of the episode is betrayed by references to a 'Kyr Kosmas' which clearly fit the deposed patriarch Kosmas II Attikos (1146-7). See my 'The *Bagoas* of Nikephoros Basilakes: A normal reaction?', *Of strangers and foreigners (late antiquity-middle ages)*, ed. L. Mayali and M. M. Mart (Studies in Comparative Legal History, Berkeley, 1993), 47-63.

gate in the sea walls at the acropolis point.[62] The other Komnenian triumphs whose itineraries are attested, those of Manuel in 1165 and 1167, followed the same route, even though **western** victories were being celebrated.[63] The exact course of the route is not described or easily reconstructed, but it can hardly have avoided the *Orphanotropheion*. The inmates would certainly have provided a convenient crowd of docile spectators, complete with choirs to hymn the emperor's praises and a resident poet to write the hymns.[64] There can be little doubt that this re-routing of the imperial triumph was a Komnenian ceremonial innovation resulting from Alexios's foundation. Whether it was a result that he intended is more doubtful, and Anna implies, at least, that it was not. It is striking how she mentions the *Orphanotropheion* immediately after describing Alexios's last campaign against the Turks. She observes that on his return, when about to embark from the Asiatic shore of the Bosporos, he decided against staging a magnificent triumphal entry. Instead, he returned to the city without ceremony, and the next day set about finding homes for the refugees he had brought with him from Asia Minor. Some he settled in monasteries, others in the *Orphanotropheion*—which is Anna's cue for her description. In other words, she associates her father's philanthropic project with his modest rejection of a triumphal homecoming such as her brother staged in 1133. Since her narrative was written after this event, it can plausibly be read as an implicit criticism of the way John had abused the paternal legacy of which she felt deprived.[65]

[62] Theodore Prodromos, VI.25ff. ed. Hörandner, 221; Niketas Choniates, ed. van Dieten, 19. Cf. H. Hunger, 'Reditus Imperatoris', *Fest und Alltag in Byzanz*, ed. G. Prinzing, D. Simon (Munich, 1990), 17-35, esp. 30-3; M. McCormick, *Eternal victory. Triumphal rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the early medieval west* (Cambridge, 1986), passim, esp. 207-221.

[63] Kinnamos, ed. Meineke, 249; Choniates, ed. van Dieten, 157-158. The abortive triumph which Manuel planned for the Turkish Sultan's visit in 1161 was also meant to go by the same route: Kinnamos, 206.

[64] Prodromos wrote four poems for the triumph of 1133: nos. III-VI, ed. Hörandner, 191-228, although as he points out (VI.98ff), he was not the only author who wrote for the occasion.

[65] Cf. *Al.*, XIV,iii.9, L, III, 158-159, S, 448.

Conclusion

The office of logothete of the sekreta, and the refoundation of the *Orphanotropheion*, were separate measures taken in response to the practical political needs of different moments of crisis. Each in its way was typical of the ruthless, autocratic conservatism of Alexios's regime, and was entirely consistent with his blatant privatisation of the state. Yet each was also consistent with earlier eleventh-century trends of a rather different character: the growing strength and cultural confidence of the civilian administrative class, and the increased concentration of financial resources on the great religious *oikoi* of Constantinople. Moreover, the two measures were connected in a way which is crucial to our evaluation of them. The *Orphanotropheion* was expanded shortly after the logothete's office had been significantly upgraded by being granted to an imperial relative. Both events can therefore be linked with an important package of administrative reforms datable to the early 1090s. As already mentioned, the new *Orphanotropheion* was clearly part of the reorganisation of state finances, which resulted in the complete reform of the coinage, and a thorough rationalisation of financial bureaux and procedures under the two *megaloi logariastai*. The enhanced role of the logothete of the sekreta as a supreme fiscal judge cannot have been unrelated to this development, or to another aspect of the reform package which has not received the comment it deserves: the establishment of a new judicial tribunal, that of the *dikaiodotes*, prior to 1094. When the logothete is seen in connection with this institution, and with the developing role of another leading official, the *protasekretis*, as the head of a law court, it becomes clear that he was part of a major expansion, and elaboration, of the judicial system under Alexios.[66]

Taken as a whole, the reform package is impressive and shows Alexios to have been a more systematic and constructive innovator in matters of government than modern scholarship has hitherto realised. Particularly striking is the fact that a significant slimming

[66] For the financial restructuring, see references above, n. 44; for the *dikaiodotes* and *protasekretis*, see Oikonomides, 'L'évolution', 131, 135; V. Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin*, II: *L'administration centrale* (Paris, 1981), V, 478.

down of the fiscal administration was accompanied by the effective creation of three new law courts, including one specialising in fiscal cases. It is therefore not sufficient to conclude that Alexios simply axed the bureaucracy in order to curb inflation of money and titles, and to find the resources for his expensive wars, payoffs, family and clientele. Rather, it may be reasonable to conclude that when the worst foreign invasions were over, Alexios made a determined effort to respond to the criticisms of his regime, by making imperial finance leaner, fitter and kinder, while at the same time extending the range and availability of imperial justice. Revolutionary this may not have been, but innovation there was.

8

Financial crisis and the rural economy

Alan Harvey

The first part of Alexios's reign was marked by a financial crisis, which was caused by the military setbacks of the 1070s and 1080s. The state's pressing need for revenues led to a dramatic accentuation of the debasement of the coinage and confusion in the rural economy with marked inconsistencies in the rate at which taxation was exacted. It is important to stress that this was a financial crisis arising out of the state's political and military difficulties and was not the result of either decline or stagnation in the economy. The problem confronting the state was that a period of prolonged warfare dramatically increased its expenditure, but its revenues were too inflexible to cope adequately with sudden increases in spending. The structure of the Byzantine economy imposed strict limits on the extent to which economic expansion was possible. The major productive unit was the peasant household which had limited means for making improvements to the land. Although some gains could be achieved through improvements to the drainage and irrigation of properties, the most important way of increasing wealth was simply to extend the area under cultivation. There is a considerable amount of evidence that this happened, at least in the European provinces of the empire, as a result of a steady increase in population during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Obviously it is impossible to estimate the extent to which imperial revenues from these provinces increased, but expansion in the rural economy was a long drawn out process. It would not have given the state much protection against the impact of a sudden increase in its military expenditure, especially when this coincided

with a reduction of the area from which revenues could be raised owing to the Turkish incursion into Asia Minor.[1]

At the same time imperial authority was undermined by the circumstances in which Nikephoros Botaneiates and then Alexios came to the throne. As usurpers their rule lacked legitimacy and they needed to win the support of powerful individuals and institutions to bolster their position. While fiscal concessions by emperors to prominent landowners were a routine factor in Byzantine political and economic history, the concessions made by the state in the 1070s and 1080s were, generally, more far-reaching than those of previous decades. Most of the earlier fiscal grants which survive in the monastic archives had allowed landowners to install a fixed number of peasants (*paroikoi*) on their estates, provided that they were not already recorded in the tax-registers as owing payments to the state. Given the comprehensiveness of the Byzantine system of land taxation, this stipulation meant that these peasants had to be landless. They were referred to in the texts as *ateleis*. The definition of the term was that they possessed no land of their own and, therefore, had no responsibility for the land-tax, any payment of the *strateia* or any other fiscal charge. The important point in this case is that the state was not relinquishing any revenues which it had been collecting. This argument rests on the assumption that the state was able to restrict landowners to the terms of the privileges. A document from the middle of the eleventh century recording the names of twenty-four *paroikoi* established on a property belonging to Nea Mone stipulated that if any were subsequently discovered owing payments to the state, their old obligations would be reimposed regardless of the monastery's privileges. Regular assessments by fiscal officials ensured that a close check was kept on the numbers of peasants installed on landowners' properties, and the regularity with which landowners obtained confirmation of previous chrysobulls is an indication of the readiness of fiscal officials to enforce the state's claims. The installation of their *paroikoi* on privileged estates was the result of a steady increase in population which made rural manpower more plentiful and, no doubt, the state, like private landowners, gained from this trend.[2]

[1] For the general historical background to this period, G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine state*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1968); P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Le monde byzantin, Paris, 1977). For the inelasticity of imperial revenues and the expense of military campaigns, see M.F. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine monetary economy c. 300-1450* (Cambridge, 1985), 221-224, 228-242. For the extent to which growth was possible in the Byzantine economy, see A. Harvey, *Economic expansion in the Byzantine empire 900-1200* (Cambridge, 1990).

The series of grants which appear in the sources, starting with the grant to Andronikos Doukas of a group of properties near Miletos in 1073, was of a different kind. There the state was conceding to landowners revenues which it had previously been collecting itself. They mostly date from the earlier years of Alexios's reign and their issue was restricted to important supporters of his rule and to a few very influential monasteries like Patmos. The most extensive concessions of fiscal revenues were made to his brothers and other close relations. The state's claim to the land-tax in the Kassandra peninsula was transferred to Adrian Komnenos, and Isaac Komnenos received a grant of fiscal revenues in the region of Thessalonike. John Doukas and Nikephoros Melissenos also received similar grants. They were all in effect associated with imperial authority, exercising justice and directing the administration in the areas where fiscal revenues had been conceded to them. Gregory Pakourianos received a concession of the complete fiscal revenues from all his properties, a privilege which also encompassed any subsequent increase in their revenues due to improvements made to the estates. On a much smaller scale a lesser magnate, Leo Kephalas, received four estates by imperial donation as a result of his military achievements; of these only one had a tax-payment incumbent on it and the state conceded all the revenues from the other three.[3] Some observations are worth making in

[2] For the definition of *ateleis paroikoi*, see P. and J. Zepos, *Jus Graeco-Romanum*, 8 vols (Athens, 1931-62), I, 617. For the grant to Nea Mone, see F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata Graeca medii aevi*, 6 vols (Vienna, 1860-90), V, 7. See also Harvey, *Economic expansion*, 47-49.

[3] *Lavra*, nos. 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 51, ed. P. Lemerle, N. Svoronos, A. Guillou, D. Papachryssanthou, *Actes de Lavra*, I, *Des origines à 1204* (Archives de l'Athos, 5, Paris, 1970), 241-251, 255-263, 269. *Patmos*, nos. 5, 6, ed. E. Vranoussi, *Βυζαντινὰ ἔγγραφα τῆς μόνης Πάτμου*, I, *Αὐτοκρατορικά* (Athens, 1980), 40-54, 55-

connection with these privileges. First, Alexios was accused of being excessively generous to members of his family, but fairly strong measures were probably needed to maintain the landed wealth of the Komnenoi. Since the family originated in Asia Minor, it is certain that much of the family's lands were lost as the Turks took possession of most of Asia Minor. Second, in some cases the state was simply passing on properties which had been confiscated from other landowners. A substantial part of Iviron's lands had been claimed by the state and granted to various members of the imperial family. One of the estates which Kephalas received had also not long before come into the state's possession through confiscation.[4] Third, the state might have derived some benefits from its concessions to landowners like Pakourianos. His activities, which were listed in the *typikon* of the monastery of Bačkovo, included the construction of new *kastra*. In the absence of any more specific detail firm conclusions cannot be drawn, but it is probable that Pakourianos performed some useful military function for the state in the region where his properties were concentrated.[5]

These fiscal concessions had to be restricted to a small group of important supporters of Alexios's rule because the critical military situation which confronted him in the first part of his reign placed an enormous burden on the state's finances. Therefore, he had to perform a delicate balancing act between granting the favours which were politically necessary to maintain his rule and raising the revenues which were essential for the conduct of his military campaigns. He did this, according to the historian Zonaras, by

68. *Patmos*, no. 50, ed. M. Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, *Βυζαντινὰ ἔγγραφα τῆς μόνης Πάτμου*, II, *Δημοσίων λειτουργῶν*, 3-35. *PakourianosTyp*, ed. P. Gautier, 'Le typikon du sébaste Grégoire Pakourianos', *REB*, 42 (1984), 125-131. J. Lefort, 'Une grande fortune foncière aux X-XIIIe siècles: les biens du monastère d'Iviron', *Structures féodales et féodalisme dans l'Occident méditerranéen (X-XIIIe siècles). Bilan et perspectives de recherches* (Collection de l' école française de Rome, 44, Rome, 1980), 738. Harvey, *Economic expansion*, 68-70.

[4] Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν*, ed. M. Pinder, T. Buttner-Wobst, 3 vols (CSHB, Bonn, 1841-97), III, 766-767. *Lavra*, I, no. 45, ed. Lemerle, Svoronos, Guillou and Papachryssanthou, 246. Lefort, 'Une grande fortune foncière', 738.

[5] *PakourianosTyp*, 32. 1796-1797, 127.

lavishing favours on members of the imperial family while firmly excluding the senatorial aristocracy from such favours and also from the positions of greatest influence and power in the government.[6] His reign was marked by a concerted effort, dictated by military necessity, to maximise the revenues which were exacted from the provinces which remained under imperial control. It led to a reorganisation of the financial administration and reform of the coinage and the taxation system. These changes took place at different phases in the reign, but its early years were marked by the desperate expedients which were used to raise cash, notably the confiscation of some ecclesiastical treasures and the further debasement of the coinage. The latter process was far advanced already by Alexios's predecessors, but the real value of the gold *nomisma* reached a new low with an issue from the Thessalonike mint in the late 1080s. These measures were short-term expedients intended to confront immediate problems.[7] Alexios also introduced changes in the financial administration early in his reign. These changes were not complete innovations, but rather an extension of a tendency towards greater central control over the administration which was already apparent in the mid-eleventh century. The co-ordination of the administrative departments became the responsibility of the *logothetes ton sekreton*, a position which first appears in the sources in 1081. The *megas logariastes ton sekreton*, an official first mentioned in 1094, was responsible for the co-ordination of the actions of the financial departments, and the *megas logariastes ton euagon oikon*, who is first mentioned in the sources in 1099, was responsible for the activities of the offices dealing with imperial properties. As a result of the creation of these offices some older financial departments either disappeared or declined. The *stratiotikon* and the *eidikon* disappeared after 1088

[6] Zonaras, XVIII.29.24, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 766-767. Hendy, *Monetary economy*, 582-586.

[7] P. Grierson, 'The debasement of the Bezant in the eleventh century', *BZ*, 47 (1954), 379-394; 'Notes on the fineness of the Byzantine solidus', *BZ*, 54 (1961), 91-97. M.F. Hendy, *Coinage and money in the Byzantine empire 1081-1261* (DOS, 12, Washington, DC, 1969), 3-9; *Monetary economy*, 509-510, 513. C. Morrisson, 'Le dévaluation de la monnaie byzantine au XIe siècle: essai d'interprétation', *TM*, 6 (1976), 3-48.

and the *sakellarion* after 1145. The *genikon* slowly declined, perhaps as a result of the growing importance of the department of the *epi ton oikeiakon*. The latter was responsible for the administration of the lands belonging to the treasury. Originally it had been a sub-department of the *genikon*, but by 1030 it had become a separate department. Its independence has been linked with Basil II's confiscation of aristocratic properties and a greater emphasis by the state on raising revenues from its own properties. While the decline in importance of the *genikon sekreton*, which was responsible for the assessment and collection of the land-tax, was partly due to Alexios's administrative changes, it was also connected to a longer term evolution of the state's financial administration.[8]

The next essential process in the stabilisation of the empire's finances was the reform of the coinage in 1092. The old system had consisted of a gold *nomisma*, a silver *milliaresion* worth 1/12 *nomisma*, and a copper *follis* valued at 288 to the *nomisma*, but the most heavily debased *nomisma* of the 1080s was worth little more than a *milliaresion* in real terms. Rather than restore this system, which was very inflexible because it was based theoretically on pure metals, Alexios created a more flexible system with new intermediate denominations consisting of alloys. He did not attempt to restore the top value *nomisma hyperpyron* to a full theoretical purity of twenty-four carats. Its fineness was approximately 20 ½ carats. The second coin, the *aspron trachy* nomisma, was an electrum coin (a gold/silver alloy) worth one-third of the *hyperpyron*. The billon *trachy*, an alloy consisting mainly of base metal with a silver content of between 6% and 7%, was originally worth 1/48 *hyperpyron*. The low value copper *tetarteron* was valued at 864 to the *hyperpyron*. The two most important mints, producing the complete range of coins, were at Constantinople and Thessalonike. A temporary mint was established in the Thracian plain at either Philippoupolis or Adrianople to produce the gold and billon coins.

[8] N. Oikonomides, 'L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au XIe siècle (1025-1118)', *TM*, 6 (1976), 125-152, esp. 135-141. H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIe-XVe siècles* (Paris, 1966), 197-205. Hendy, *Monetary economy*, 429-434.

A further mint, which was located in south or central Greece, probably at Thebes, and produced copper half *tetartera*, was certainly in operation in Manuel's reign and might have originated during that of Alexios.[9]

For most of Alexios's reign the fiscal system was in a state of some confusion. Although this situation had its origins in the debasement of the coinage, it persisted after the coinage reform. The root of the problem was that a large proportion of the coinage in circulation was worth less in real terms than its nominal value. Naturally, landowners sought to make their tax-payments in the most heavily debased coins and to resist attempts by the fiscal administration to raise taxes in response to the debasement. While the most powerful were able to do this, the state with its pressing need for revenues responded by attempting to extract higher rates from other tax-payers. This culminated in Alexios's reform of the taxation system in 1106-9, which effectively generalised the higher rates of payment. It should be stressed that the reform dealt only with the basic land-tax, which was just part of the burden imposed on the rural population. It also had to face a whole host of other charges—various payments in kind and demands for labour services. Already during the eleventh century there had been a perceptible tendency for some of these charges to be commuted into cash payments. More cash was being extracted in taxation by the state, which in turn was minting and putting into circulation larger quantities of money. In this respect Alexios's taxation policies were a continuation and culmination of a longer term trend.[10]

As the debasement became more pronounced the state had to revise its tax assessments to compensate for the lower quality of coin it was receiving in its tax revenues. There was a rapid succession of fiscal enquiries in the late eleventh century. In 1079 John Kataphloron made an extensive assessment of the region of Thessalonike in which he increased the tax-payment incumbent on the

[9] Hendy, *Monetary economy*, 434-436, 513-517.

[10] Zepos, *JGR*, I, 334-340. Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 50-64. C. Morrisson, 'La Logarikè: réforme monétaire et réforme fiscale sous Alexis Ier Comnène', *TM*, 7 (1979), 419-464. For the commutation of various obligations into cash payments during the eleventh century, see Harvey, *Economic expansion*, 111-114.

properties of the monastery of Lavra from 46 7/24 *nomismata*, a figure which had been established in the 1040s, to 79 ¾ *nomismata*. As the monastery's properties had not been extended so dramatically since the earlier assessment, the increase was clearly intended to counteract the effects of the debasement of the coinage.[11]

Within a decade this assessment was no longer adequate because the debasement had been accentuated under Alexios and there was scarcely any gold content in the *nomismata* struck towards the end of the 1080s. Consequently, the earlier assessment made by Kataphloron was declared invalid and Niketas Xiphilinos, the *krites* and *anagrapheus* of Boleron, Strymon and Thessalonike, was instructed to raise the level of taxation by imposing a new rate of *epibole* (the number of *modioi* corresponding to one *nomisma* of the basic land-tax). As a result of this change landowners found that the area of land accounted for by the sum which they had been paying in taxation was reduced. This was particularly significant because land ownership and the payment of the land-tax were closely connected. In land disputes evidence that one of the parties had regularly paid the tax incumbent upon the property in question was regarded as effective proof of ownership. So by changing the rate of taxation the state was in effect undermining landowners' claims to part of the land which they had been holding. The alternatives open to the state were either to raise the total tax-payment of the landowner or to leave him in possession of the extent of land which corresponded to his earlier tax-payment and to appropriate the remainder of the land for the state's use. A large proportion of the confiscated land in the Chalkidike peninsula was not assigned to a department administering properties belonging to the state; instead its fiscal revenues were granted to various members of the imperial family.[12]

Documents from the Athos archives demonstrate how the procedure was implemented and illustrate the widely divergent for-

[11] *Lavra*, I, no. 50, ed. Lemerle, Svoronos, Guillou and Papachryssanthou, 263-269. For the assessment of one particular property by Kataphloron, *Lavra*, I, no. 39, ed. Lemerle, Svoronos, Guillou and Papachryssanthou, 219-223.

[12] For the change in the rate of *epibole*, see *Xenophon*, no. 2, ed. D. Papachryssanthou, *Actes de Xenophon* (Archives de l'Athos, 15, Paris, 1986), 78-79. See also Lefort, 'Une grande fortune foncière', 738.

tunes experienced by different monasteries when confronted by the state's demands. An estate belonging to Xenophon had been expropriated by the state and then transferred to the emperor's brother Isaac. In return Xiphilinos put the monastery in possession of two properties which had been part of the surplus assigned to the state by its fiscal officials following the change in the rate of *epibole*.[13] The monks of Docheiariou exploited their influence to avoid paying the increase which resulted from Xiphilinos's assessment. The tax on a property, Satoubla, had been assessed at one *nomisma* by Kataphloron and another official, Kontoleon. Although their actions had been annulled, the monastery was allowed as a special favour to continue paying this tax without being subjected to any increase. Xiphilinos was instructed to leave the monastery in possession of the land corresponding to its tax-payment and also the surplus which he had sold back to the monastery. A much larger property, Perigardikeia, was also affected by Xiphilinos's actions. The monks approached Anna Dalassene with a request that the payment established by Kataphloron and Kontoleon for this estate should be maintained and that the additional payment of 100 *nomismata* should not be imposed on the monastery. As the surface area of Perigardikeia was around 20,000 *modioi*, the increase would have been a substantial one, at the rate of one *nomisma* for 200 *modioi*. The manoeuvres of the monks were successful and a *prostaxis* from Anna Dalassene instructed Xiphilinos not to remove any part of this estate from Docheiariou, but to allow it to keep the land accounted for by its tax-payment, an additional 200 *modioi* as a donation, and the remainder which was sold to it at the local price.[14]

Part of his assessment of the region included a new enquiry into Lavra's estates. The monastery was treated as an exceptional case. Its tax-payment was not to be assessed according to the general ordinance which Xiphilinos was to follow in imposing a new rate of *epibole* on properties belonging to other landowners. In effect this meant that Lavra was exempted from the general increase

[13] *Xenophon*, no. 2, ed. Papachryssanthou, 78-79.

[14] *Docheiareiou*, no. 2, ed. N. Oikonomides, *Actes de Docheiariou* (Archives de l'Athos, 13, Paris, 1984), 54-59.

in taxation which was imposed by Xiphilinos. The procedure, which was followed in making the assessment of Lavra's estates, had some other significant differences from that which was generally applied to other landowners. Xiphilinos was to apply the rate of 535 ½ *modioi* for each *nomisma* of Lavra's lands, a substantially more generous rate than other landowners enjoyed. Another unusual feature of this case was that the rate was based on a statement by Lavra's abbot that its properties amounted to 42,705 *modioi* and not on a measurement by the state's officials. Not surprisingly, the monastery was in fact in possession of more land than the abbot had stated, 47,051 *modioi*, and Xiphilinos created a new rate of *epibole*, 590 *modioi* and one *litra* to the *nomisma*, based on the new measurement. He did so without imperial authorisation but the change was subsequently confirmed. Once the tax-payment corresponding to the rate of *epibole* had been imposed on a property, the standard procedure was to impose four supplementary charges which were calculated according to the level of the basic tax-payment. In Lavra's case these charges were not imposed and the total payment of the monastery was linked to the rate of *epibole*. As a result of Xiphilinos's enquiry 20,380 ½ *modioi* were attributed to the treasury and a *praktikon* was drawn up detailing this land and that which Lavra was entitled to retain. In practice it continued to hold land illegally. In 1094 it was found holding a surplus of 11,000 *modioi* and received an unconditional donation of 8,000 *modioi* from Alexios.[15] It is likely that few landowners were able to evade the effects of the state's fiscal severity in the way that Lavra and Docheiariou did. It is precisely because of Lavra's special situation that so much information about its landed wealth is available. Documents from the archives of other monasteries do however provide a rather different perspective on the state's fiscal measures. There is a sharp contrast between the rate of *epibole* imposed on Lavra's lands and that imposed on a property of Esphigmenou which gives an idea of the rate of taxation paid by less privileged landowners. In 1095 Esphigmenou re-

[15] *Lavra*, I, nos. 50, 52, ed. Lemerle, Svoronos, Guillou and Papachryssanthou, 263-269, 271-275. N. Svoronos, 'L'épibolè à l'époque des Comnènes', *TM*, 3 (1968), 375-395.

ceived a property as compensation for the loss of one of its estates, which had been handed over to Isaac Komnenos. Its new property was assessed at 412 ½ *modioi* of second quality land. Its basic land-tax was established at 2 ¾ *nomismata*, a rate of 150 *modioi* to the *nomisma*. Then, unlike on Lavra's properties, the supplementary taxes were added, giving the monastery a total tax-payment of 3 1/24 *nomismata*.[16] The monastery which fared the worst at this time was Iviron, which lost about 1,300 hectares (approximately 13-15,000 *modioi*) of its land. The bulk of the confiscated land was located in west Chalkidike and a smaller part (200 hectares) in the Kassandra and Longos peninsulas. The dating of the confiscation is uncertain. It seems to have taken place in two stages, firstly before 1095 and secondly before 1101, and the same procedure of the establishment of a new rate of taxation followed by the seizure of the surplus land was implemented.[17]

The inconsistencies which had developed in the fiscal system during the period of debasement were the consequence of the ability of some landowners to exploit the debasement to make their tax-payments in coins worth less in real terms than their theoretical obligation and therefore problems persisted after the coinage reform of 1092 until the fiscal system was reformed in 1106-9. The changes which Alexios introduced are contained in the reports of two officials of the *genikon sekreton*, John Tzirithon and George Spanopoulos, and Alexios's responses to them. At this time the collection of the taxes in the provinces of Thrace and Macedonia was farmed out to individuals who agreed to pay a specific amount to the *genikon*. In 1104-5 Demetrios Kamateros undertook to double the revenues from these provinces and when he failed his house in Constantinople was confiscated. In 1105-6 the collection was entrusted to Nikephoros Artabasdos who succeeded in collecting the stipulated amount. Artabasdos reported that there had been considerable differences in the payments made by individual villages and these variations had been established long enough to have become customary. In some villages one *no-*

[16] *Esphigmenou*, no. 5, ed. J. Lefort, *Actes d'Esphigmenou* (Archives de l'Athos, 6, Paris, 1973), 54-58.

[17] Lefort, 'Une grande fortune foncière', 735.

misma was exacted instead of one *milliaresion*, in others one *nomisma* instead of two *milliaresia;* in some villages one *nomisma* instead of three *milliaresia*, in other villages one *nomisma* instead of four *milliaresia*. Some powerful landowners, on the other hand, were paying one *trachy nomisma* instead of twelve *milliaresia*. Here the *milliaresion*, the silver coin of the pre-reform currency, was used as a term of account equivalent to one-twelfth of the old gold *nomisma* of 24 carat fineness. The situation was confused by the varying quality of the *nomismata* in circulation at the beginning of the twelfth century. The *nomismata* which Alexios issued before the coinage reform had a fineness of much less than eight carats, while the better quality *nomismata* of Michael VII had a fineness of fifteen carats. So the powerful landowners who were paying one *trachy nomisma* instead of twelve *milliaresia* might have been paying two-thirds of their theoretical obligation or well below one-third, depending on which coin was extracted from them. However, as the older pre-reform coins were collected in taxation, they would have been replaced by the new coinage. By 1105-6, when Artabasdos was collecting the taxes, large quantities of the electrum *nomisma* of the new coinage (with a fineness of 6-7 carats) must have been in circulation. Consequently, the weaker section of the rural population who were compelled to pay one *nomisma* instead of one *milliaresion* were paying at least three times their theoretical obligation, while powerful landowners who were paying one electrum *nomisma* instead of twelve *milliaresia* were paying about three times less than theirs.[18]

The confusion was resolved only when Alexios reformed the fiscal system in 1106-9. In 1105-6 Artabasdos had followed the practice established by his predecessors, but owing to the variations in the rates at which payments were exacted he asked for clarification of the procedure for the collection in 1106-7. He was instructed to collect one *palaion trachy nomisma* for every *milliaresion* from all the villagers and powerful individuals. This *nomisma* belonged to the old pre-reform coinage, but Alexios's subsequent instructions referred instead to the *aspron trachy nomisma*,

[18] Zepos, *JGR*, I, 334-340. Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 53-55. Morrisson, 'La Logarikè', 445-452.

the electrum coin of the reformed coinage, which was worth at least three times as much as the *milliaresion*. This became the basis of the new taxation system and, as the earlier debased coinage disappeared from circulation, the rate of taxation was substantially increased. The highest rate, which had previously been exacted from the weakest parts of the rural population, was in effect institutionalised and it is probable that wealthier landowners would have been unable to avoid paying the increase. The tax-payers who were subjected to the increase were clearly discontented and Artabasdos submitted another request for clarification, to which Alexios responded by confirming that the changes applied to all villages and landowners.[19] The exceptions were, of course, the exceptionally privileged like Lavra, whose payments had already been established by imperial decrees.

Another alteration to the system concerned the supplementary charges, which were raised with the basic land-tax. Again the general tendency was to exact more cash for those payments. There were four of these charges and they had been calculated in a very uneven way. Some were flat-rate taxes and consequently the charges varied in their severity in a haphazard way depending on the amount of the basic tax. Alexios's reform removed the inconsistencies and a standard rate for the supplementary charges was established at 33 *folleis* for each *nomisma* worth 96 *folleis*, a higher rate than that which had prevailed before, except in a few anomalous cases.[20]

The lengthy interval between the coinage reform in 1092 and the taxation in 1106-9 can be explained by two factors. The most important was that the fiscal changes made sense only in the context of a stable and coherent monetary system and it took time for the new coinage to replace the old. Obviously, precision in this matter is impossible. The quantities in which the new coinage was minted are not known. There were three types of the electrum *trachy*. The first two have been attributed to the mint in Constantinople and the third to a provincial mint, probably Thessalonike. There were six types of billon *trachy*. Four were the product of the

[19] Zepos, *JGR*, I, 334.
[20] Zepos, *JGR*, I, 336-338.

metropolitan mint and the remaining two were probably minted at Thessalonike and Philippoupolis—the latter was a temporary mint of limited output. The precise timing of these coin issues is unknown. It is also impossible to quantify the amount of old coinage which was recovered through taxation, but it would certainly have been large. The old coinage continued to be available in the years immediately after the coinage reform and the reference to the *palaion nomisma* in Alexios's first response to Artabasdos indicates that it could still be found in some quantity, but this was likely to have diminished with each year's tax-collection. Also old coins which had been stored as treasure were always likely to reappear in circulation. In 1112 and 1117 the monastery of Docheiariou, which seems to have come into possession of some hoarded treasure, was making purchases in good quality old coins. But by 1106 the new coinage was circulating in large enough quantities to make the fiscal changes feasible.[21]

The second factor delaying the reform was the slowness of the bureaucratic procedure. All the important changes had to be referred to Alexios and he was often away from the capital. During the course of the fiscal reform a difference of opinion arose among officials concerning the interpretation of Alexios's instructions. It concerned the calculation of the *lepta psephia*, the amount raised in fractions of the *nomisma*. As Alexios was away from the capital they decided to proceed along the course most advantageous to the treasury and it was subsequently admitted by Spanopoulos that the collections of 1106-8 had been to the detriment of the emperor's subjects. It is a striking illustration of the slowness of the imperial administration in the prolonged absence of the emperor.[22]

The correspondence which outlines the principles of the reformed system refers specifically to the provinces of Thrace and Macedonia, but the problems there would have existed elsewhere in the empire. The reform brought a new stability after a period of fiscal disorder in the provinces. The series of enquiries into Lavra's

[21] For the issues of the reformed coinage, see Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 96-98. For the treasure of Docheiariou see *Docheiariou*, nos. 3, 4, ed. Oikonomides, 60-73, 73-88.

[22] Zepos, *JGR*, I, 335.

estates ended at exactly this time. After the enquiry by Xeros in 1094 there had been a further assessment by another official, Andronikos, and the monastery seems to have obtained a further reduction in its tax-payment. However, the administration had subsequently made fresh attempts to exact more from the monastery. Taxes for the *dromos* and the fleet had been imposed on its lands. The monks requested their abolition and conceded two of its estates to the treasury. The new assessment, made on Alexios's instructions for all the monastery's properties, was caused not simply by the confusion surrounding Lavra's lands, but was part of the general restoration of order to the fiscal system. In 1107-8 a survey of the entire region of Thessalonike was made and Lavra was found holding 51,403 *modioi*. The *logothetes ton sekreton* was instructed to leave Lavra in possession of the land which was accounted for by its tax-payment and by previous imperial donations amounting to 11,000 *modioi* and to attribute to the monastery another 16,000 *modioi* from the surplus land which it was holding as a further imperial donation. The change in the rate of *epibole* on the monastery's land from 535 ½ to 590 *modioi* a *nomisma* was confirmed and another donation of 1,000 *modioi* was added. The result of this series of enquiries was the confirmation of Lavra's ownership of 47,052 *modioi*, the same amount that Xiphilinos had found in its possession in 1088-9 and the monastery also succeeded in getting its tax-payment reduced from 46 $^{7}/_{24}$ *nomismata* to 32 $^{7}/_{24}$ *nomismata*. The other 4,351 *modioi* which it was holding were transferred to the state.[23]

It is only because of Lavra's special status that evidence survives of the assessment of the whole of the theme of Thessalonike in 1107-8. It illuminates an obscure passage in a charter dealing with a partition of properties among three brothers in 1110. Referring to an estate, Pinson, it states that if the emperor decided that the land which had been assigned to the treasury should be subjected to the land-tax, two of the brothers would recover the estate and pay the tax imposed on it. Clearly, the state had taken possession of the property after the survey of 1107-8 and many other es-

[23] *Lavra*, I, no. 58, ed. Lemerle, Svoronos, Guillou and Papachryssanthou, 300-304.

tates doubtless suffered the same fate. In the confused condition of the fiscal system at this time many landowners other than Lavra must have held lands for which they were not paying enough tax, especially after the higher rates of tax were imposed. It was logical for the state to claim these lands at the same time that the fiscal system was being reformed and it is a reasonable assumption that other landowners were less able than Lavra to retain the surplus properties which they were holding.[24]

Complaints about the harshness of taxation appear in the literary sources and provide indications of the pressure which the fiscal administration was exerting on landowners. Zonaras accused Alexios of sending tax-assessors into the fields and villages of his subjects to make new assessments and to devise new forms of impositions. A similar stress on heavy taxation was made by John the Oxite in his invective against Alexios.[25] The archbishop Theophylact complained that the peasants installed on a property of the church of Ochrid were forced to pay taxes on mills and fishing at a higher rate than the laity in spite of an earlier exemption. That someone with such useful social contacts, including members of the imperial family, had so many problems indicates how generalised was the state's fiscal pressure on landowners and how exceptionally privileged Lavra was.[26] There is also the evidence of Nicholas Mouzalon, who resigned as archbishop of Cyprus in either 1110 or 1111 after a short archiepiscopate which coincided with the fiscal reform and then wrote an apologetic poem explaining his actions. He described the difficult conditions which the island's population had to endure and especially the harsh taxation which was imposed on them.[27]

[24] *Lavra*, I, no. 59, ed. Lemerle, Svoronos, Guillou and Papachryssanthou, 310.75-77.

[25] Zonaras, XVIII.25.19, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 737-738. P. Gautier, 'Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite contre Alexis Ier Comnène', *REB*, 28 (1970), 31.

[26] Theophylact, ep. 96, ed. P. Gautier, *Théophylacte d'Achrida, II, Lettres* (CFHB, 16/2, Thessalonike, 1986), 489; M.E. Mullett, *Theophylact through his letters. The two worlds of an exile bishop* (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 1981), 488-550.

[27] C. Galatariotou, *The making of a saint. The life, times and sanctification of Neophytos the Recluse* (Cambridge, 1991), 192.

The impact of Alexios's reform was felt not only by landowners, including peasants who cultivated their own land, but also by *paroikoi* who were installed on the properties of the state and large landowners. The state's fiscal officials drew up the *praktika*, which detailed the obligations owed by the peasants, and these documents were then handed over to the landowner. Consequently, any change in the fiscal procedures of the administration affected the entire peasantry, whether independent peasants owning their own land, *paroikoi* of the state or of private landowners. Alexios's reform led to an increase in the amount of money extracted in taxation from the rural population as a whole. This needs to be emphasised because the payments which the state was obtaining from the *paroikoi* on its own estates appear to have become a more important part of its revenues from the eleventh century onwards. The payments made by *paroikoi* were established at a higher level than the land-tax; they had to cover the tax-payment which was paid to the state by the landowner—unless he had obtained a fiscal privilege—as well as the landowner's rent. However, a narrow focus on the increase in the *demosion* resulting from the fiscal reform gives an exaggerated impression of the sharpness of the intensification in the tax burden. While it was undoubtedly severe—the reactions of some of the taxpayers and the evidence of the literary sources leave little doubt about that—the *demosion* was only part of the obligations to which the rural population was liable. A variety of payments in kind and labour services was also exacted, but it is impossible to estimate their importance in comparison with the *demosion*. Landowners were especially keen to protect themselves against these charges by obtaining privileges from the emperor, because their imposition could be very arbitrary. As there had already been a tendency in the eleventh century for some obligations to be commuted into cash payments, the trend towards the greater extraction of cash payments from the rural economy was already under way before Alexios's reign, but his reforms gave the process greater impetus. There is a parallel between the effects of Alexios's rule in the sphere of taxation and the more general administrative changes which he introduced. The latter resulted in an increased centralisation of government, again a process for which there were eleventh-century precedents, but

which reached its culmination under Alexios.[28] Administrative centralisation was accompanied by a greater concentration of the most powerful military and administrative posts in the hands of the Komnenoi and members of other related families. Possibly this was a result of the insecurity of Alexios's position as a usurper. The extensive grants of fiscal revenues to members of his family were part of the same policy. The initial impetus behind the grants was the need to extend the family's landed wealth in the Balkans after its losses in Asia Minor, but they set the tone for the concentration of power by the Komnenoi. Alexios needed to secure his position which was initially very vulnerable owing to the combination of external threats to the empire and his situation as a usurper. In order to confront the external threats he had to raise large amounts of revenues and the administrative and fiscal changes which he introduced were necessary for this purpose and for the secure establishment of the Komnenian dynasty. Without the intensification of fiscal pressure on landowners and peasants—which was possible only in the context of the economic expansion of the eleventh century—it is doubtful that Alexios would have been able to withstand all the internal and external challenges to his rule.

[28] N. Oikonomides,"Η Πεῖρα περὶ παροίκων', *Ἀφιέρωμα στὸν Νῖκο Σβορῶνο*, I (Rethymnon, 1986), 232-242, repr. N. Oikonomides, *Byzantium from the ninth century to the fourth crusade* (Hampshire, 1992), XIII.

9

Lawyers and legislators: aspects of law-making in the time of Alexios I

Ludwig Burgmann

In 1081 Alexios was occupied with preparations for war against the empire's enemies. Being, however, no less concerned with the internal affairs of the state—τὰ σεκρετικά τε καὶ πολιτικὰ πράγματα—he conferred extraordinary executive powers on his mother Anna Dalassene. In the *chrysoboullos logos* issued for this purpose he gave a description of those powers.[1] As a Byzantine emperor he did so in a Byzantine manner. On the one hand Anna was entrusted with the administration of everything (ἡ τῶν ἁπάντων διοίκησις), while on the other he enumerated certain rights and functions which she was to exercise:

> whatever she decrees in writing—whether it be referred to her by the president of the *sekreta* or by his subordinate clerks, or by any other person who prepares memoranda or requests or judgements concerning remissions of public debts—shall have permanent validity as if it had been ordered by my serene majesty and the written words had been uttered from my very mouth. Whatever rescripts or orders are made by her, written or unwritten, reasonable or unreasonable, shall be regarded as coming from myself, provided that they bear her seal, (ie) the Transfiguration and the Assumption, and the date by (the hand of) the one who at the time will be running the *sekreta*. Moreo-

[1] The chrysobull has been imparted to us by Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, III.vi.4-8, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols (Paris, 1937-1945), I, 121-122, my own translation; cf. tr. E.R.A. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1988), 117-118.

> ver, with regard to promotions and successions in the *sekreta* and the *themata*, and in the matter of dignities, offices and donations of immovable property, my saintly mother shall be free like an emperor to act as seems good to her. Consequently, whoever will be promoted or succeed to the *sekreta* or the *themata* and be honoured with the highest or medium or lowest dignities, shall for the future be untransferable and unremovable. Further, increases of salary, additional gifts, reductions of the so-called habitual charges, seizures and releases (of immovable property)[2] shall be ordered by her indisputably. In brief, nothing shall be reckoned invalid which she will command either in writing or by word of mouth, for her words and her orders shall be reckoned as my majesty's and none of them shall be annulled; on the contrary they shall be permanently valid for future times. And neither any of her assistants nor the *logothetes ton sekreton* of the time himself shall have any fear now or later that he will be called to account or subjected to examination by anyone whomsoever, whether their actions seem to be reasonable or unreasonable; for of whatever nature they are, they shall completely and forever be beyond revision, being founded on the present *chrysoboullos logos*.

So far the chrysobull. It does not say a word about legislation nor, incidentally, does it mention judicial competence. It is all about positions and money.

Now one might say that in Byzantine society too positions and money were crucial in politics, so that we are permitted to conclude *a fortiori* that the passing of legislation was included in the powers granted to Anna. On the other hand one might argue that neither Alexios's chrysobull nor Anna Komnene's panegyric narrative about her father's pious devotion to his mother should be taken at face value. Indeed, there are some points in favour of the latter interpretation—among them the fact that none of the surviving decrees unquestionably issued by Anna Dalassene deals with a matter of striking importance.

[2] σχιδευμοὺς καὶ ἀποσχιδευμούς. The meaning of these words has not yet been exactly established; see P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Le monde byzantin, Paris, 1976), 155 n. 87; to the references can now be added the first of the three Alexian *lyseis* quoted below n. 7.

However, this chapter is not going to be concerned with either of the two Annas. Nevertheless, the question remains, whether legislation was a distinguishable part of general administration at all in Alexian Byzantium. The answer is certainly not as obvious as Dölger/Karayannopoulos would like us to believe. In their *Urkundenlehre* they distinguish four categories of imperial documents: 1. Laws, subdivided into legislative documents and documents concerning actual legal cases. 2. Documents concerning foreign policy. 3. Documents concerning administration. 4. Privileges.[3] This classification is based on the content of the documents using diplomatic form as a secondary criterion.[4] Dölger/Karayannopoulos do not define their categories, nor do they give a complete classified list of the surviving documents. They obviously regard their categories as self-evident. This is far from being the case. Only the second category—documents concerning foreign policy—seems to be clearly definable, although even here difficulties arise when one comes to think of privileges granted to foreigners or of the sometimes rather detailed legal provisions laid down in some of the treaties. All the more one gets into difficulties when trying to draw a clear distinction between legislative and administrative documents or between laws and privileges. Again, Alexios's chrysobull for his mother can serve as an example: since it established a regency it could be seen as an administrative act, be it at the highest possible level. By modern 'western' standards this constitutional character and, in particular, the concluding provision that exempts all assistants of the princess regent from any future responsibility, would call for a law. For Alexios, however, it was a matter of granting rights to his mother and her assistants, and accordingly he issued a *chrysoboullos logos*, this being the appropriate diplomatic form for privileges.

[3] F. Dölger/J. Karayannopoulos, *Byzantinische Urkundenlehre*. 1. Abschnitt. *Die Kaiserurkunden* (Munich, 1968), VI (Table of contents) and 24-25.

[4] It is true that Dölger/Karayannopoulos repeatedly admit a confusion on the part of the Byzantines. Writing a handbook on diplomatics they would have done better to make diplomatic form their first criterion.

Not venturing on a definition of law and legislation ourselves, in the present chapter we shall adopt the view of Alexios.[5] At the beginning of the *sanctio* of his first novel on betrothal he speaks of 'this decree (διάταξις) that is promulgated generally and against everybody (γενικῶς καὶ κατὰ πάντων ἐκφωνηθεῖσα) and is to be effective in future (εἰς τὸ ἑξῆς ὀφείλουσα κρατεῖν)'.[6] Again we shall not discuss whether in Byzantine eyes these two elements were necessary for an imperial order to be regarded as law. We simply use them as criteria to delimit the field of inquiry. Since Alexios is not everywhere as explicit as in the passage just quoted, in some cases his intention has to be deduced from the addressee and/or the publication order of a decree. In this respect we shall confine ourselves to those decrees that were to be sent to 'the law-courts' (τὰ δικαστήρια) and were not directed to a single σέκρετον or a provincial official.[7] A special problem is presented by the documents that were addressed to the oecumenical patriarch.

[5] For other possible approaches see M. T. Fögen, 'Gesetz und Gesetzgebung in Byzanz. Versuch einer Funktionsanalyse', *Ius Commune*, 14 (1987), 137-158, esp. 137-139.

[6] No. 3 on the list given below.

[7] Thus we shall leave out Coll.IV 20 (Dölger 1083) of AD 1082: issued by Anna Dalassene and directed to a *krites Thrakes kai Makedonias* this *prostagma* is rather an act of administration than of legislation. For similiar reasons we omit Coll.IV 43 (Dölger 1279), known only from a scholion on the Basilica, and four recently discovered documents—three *lyseis* and one *semeioma*—cited in an anonymous commentary on the Nomokanon and seemingly stemming from the archive of the *orphanotropheion*; see V. Tiftixoglu, 'Zur Genese der Kommentare des Theodoros Balsamon. Mit einem Exkurs über die unbekannten Kommentare des Sinaiticus gr. 1117', *Byzantium in the 12th century. Canon law, state and society*, ed. N. Oikonomides (Athens, 1991), 483-532, esp. 497 n. 65, 504 n. 88, 513 n. 140; V. Tiftixoglu/Sp. Troianos, 'Unbekannte Kaiserurkunden und Basilikentestimonia aus dem Sinaiticus 1117', *Fontes Minores*, 9 (1993), 137-179, esp. 143-147. The same would apply to another *lysis* to the *orphanotrophos* that was published by N. Svoronos, 'Les privilèges de l'église à l'époque des Comnènes: un rescrit inédit de Manuel Ier Comnène', *TM*, 1 (1965), 325-391, repr. *Études sur l'organisation intérieure, la société et l'économie de l'empire Byzantin* (London, 1973), VII if we accept its attribution to Alexios proposed by A. Schminck, 'Zur Entwicklung des Eherechts in der Komnenenepoche', *Byzantium in the 12th century*, 555-587, esp. 563-564, n. 40.

With regard to this group we shall take into account only those decrees which concerned the general public, leaving aside those dealing with purely ecclesiastical matters.[8]

For the sake of convenience I give a numbered list (fig. 3) of the pertinent documents in their chronological order, showing the respective numbers in Dölger's *Regesten* and Zepos's edition and summarizing the central rule(s) of each document.[9] I include one document (no. 8) that, although not matching our criteria, will have to be referred to several times.

As to the dates of promulgation that differ from those given by Dölger and/or Zepos, I can now conveniently refer to a somewhat surprising footnote by Andreas Schminck.[10] Only with regard to no. 10 do the arguments not seem to me as decisive as Schminck suggests. The manuscript tradition offers two emperors' names (Alexios and Manuel), two indictions (ιγ' and γ'), and two months (March and May), which leaves us with nine possible years of publication: 1090, 1095, 1105, 1110, 1150, 1155, 1165, 1170, and 1180. Nevertheless I included the decree in the list, if only to avoid suppressing the problem of attribution.

The dates lead us to our first observation: the documents whose year of promulgation is firmly established range from 1082 to 1095, thus covering not even the first half of Alexios's reign.

A second observation is almost as straightforward and yet equally surprising: the majority of the documents on our list is concerned with questions of judicial procedure. Only the two decrees on betrothal (nos. 3 and 7) stand apart; even in no. 9 such a

[8] In particular, we shall exclude Alexios's edict on the reform of the clergy, ed. P. Gautier, *REB* (1973), 165-201 (Dölger, no. 1236), as well as Coll.IV 18 (Dölger, no. 1071) of AD 1081: restating the rules about the competent court in cases of clerics vs. laymen, this chapter has recently been shown to be part of a circumstantial programmatic chrysobull given by Alexios to the great church of Constantinople; see Tiftixoglu, 'Kommentare', 527-528 n. 66, and Tiftixoglu/Troianos, 'Kaiserurkunden', 139-143.

[9] F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565-1453*. 2. Teil: *Regesten von 1025-1204* (Munich, 1925); Zepos, *JGR*, I. In the pertinent column 'IV' means Zachariae's 'Collatio IV', whereas 'App.' refers to the appendix collecting documents that were published after Zachariae's edition had appeared.

[10] Schminck, 'Entwicklung', 563-565, n. 40.

	Date	Dölger	Zepos	Content
1	1082	1082	IV 19	Minors cannot get restitution against their oath
2	1084	1113	IV 38	The party appealing has to appear before the court within 20 days
3	1084	1116	IV 24	'True betrothals' must follow recent (ecclesiastical) legislation; preliminary arrangements are subject to older (secular) law
4	1085	1122	IV 26	A fourth production of witnesses is not allowed
5	1087	1133	App.25	a. In all cases to be settled by oath the summonses must be made through a judge's semeioma; b. Minors must not take an oath
6	1090	1091	App.23	Senators who are businessmen lose the privilege to take the oath at home
7	1092	1167	IV 31	The first novel on betrothal (above no 3) is interpreted and fully corroborated
8	1092	1084	IV 21	Questions concerning the validity of private documents and the time set for their production in court
9A	10	1177	IV 35A	a. Counter-witnesses against those who file a suit for their freedom must not be accepted; b. in marriages between slaves the hierologia has to take place
9B	95 10 95	1178	IV 35B	
10	?	1179	IV 74	After the 20-day term of deliberation any appeal to the emperor during a trial is to be ignored
11	?	1280	IV 45	If in cases of oral contracts one party produces witnesses, the other cannot ask the adversary to take an oath if it has disputed the evidence of the witnesses

Figure 3: list of Alexian decrees

procedural detail as *antiparastatike martyria* plays a prominent part.

Our third statement needs some additional information: most of our documents have their origin in actual legal cases. Nos. 2, 4 and 7 are explicitly called *lyseis* and correspond to memoranda submitted to the emperor by the president of the acting court; of the *hypomneseis* those pertaining to nos. 4[11] and 7 are extant. No. 8 is introduced as a *semeiosis*, followed by an excerpt of the decision; no. 6 is of a very similar nature. As regards no. 11, we cannot be sure about its origin and formal status since we know it only through a reference in the *Tipukeitos*. The rather detailed technical provisions, however, and especially the alternative offered, makes one believe that an actual case lies behind it. No. 1, finally, was issued in answer to a petition of an interested party, the proceedings not yet having reached the stage of a trial.

Nevertheless, with the exception of the *semeiosis* no. 8, all these decrees can equally be regarded as laws. Actually, the word νόμος occurs not only in no. 5; in no. 6 we come across the rather pointed expression 'νόμος μὴ καιρικός',[12] the verb νομοθετεῖν is to be found at the beginning of the *dispositio* of no. 1, and the epilogue of no. 7 speaks of the 'present legislation' (παροῦσα νομοθεσία).[13] Likewise, periphrastic expressions such as 'διάταξις γενικῶς καὶ κατὰ πάντων ἐκφωνηθεῖσα καὶ εἰς τὸ ἑξῆς ὀφείλουσα κρατεῖν', 'καθολικῷ λόγῳ διατεταγμένον' or 'ἐν τύπῳ γενικοῦ διατάγματος' are not confined to nos. 3 and 5; in no. 1 the emperor speaks of a 'καθολικὸν καὶ τέλειον καὶ γενικὸν παράγγελμα' and 'γενικῶς ἐκφωνηθὲν θέσπισμα', and no. 9 is called διάταγμα γενικόν and ὁρισμός τάξιν ἔχων νομικοῦ διατάγματος. In 1085 Skylitzes, at the time *megas droungarios*, at the end of a *hypomnesis* (pertaining to

[11] Together with a re-edition of the *lysis* it was first published by H.J. Scheltema, 'Une pétition à l'empereur Alexis Comnène, de l'an 1085', *Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité*, 5 (= *Mélanges Fernand De Visscher* IV) (1950), 457-463.

[12] This does not mean that for the Byzantines a νόμος καιρικός was conceivable. The qualification μὴ καιρικός seems to have been added rather to make clear that the decision is to be valid not just for the actual case.

[13] In the prologue of the *lysis* Alexios even takes the opportunity to reflect at some length on the emperor's right to give laws.

no. 4) even reminds the emperor to deliver the *lysis* 'precisely and judiciously (σαφῶς καὶ εὐκρινῶς), for the decision will retain the status of a law when being passed on to subsequent times (νόμου γὰρ τάξιν μέλλει ἐπέχειν τὸ δόγμα τῇ διαδοχῇ τοῦ χρόνου παραπεμπόμενον)'. Seven years later in another *hypomnesis* (pertaining to no. 7), Skylitzes uses almost the same, if not stronger words.[14] In both cases the emperor hastens to comply with this exhortation by ordering that the procedure he prescribes should be followed in future, and that his rescript is to be registered not only in Skylitzes's, but also in the other *dikasteria*. Similarly, in no. 2 he orders the *hypomnestikon*—and the *lysis* is to be understood with it—to be published. This corresponds with the apostrophe to the 'presidents of the law-courts' that occurs in no. 10.

In some cases the imperial chancery seems to have felt it advisable to draft two different versions of a decree—one to be handed over to the inquiring official or the petitioning party, the other for broader publication, yet both of them to be issued officially. A well-known example is no. 9: version A addresses the oecumenical patriarch, version B the metropolitan of Thessalonike, who obviously had caused the decree to be issued. Similarly, of no. 1 we possess not only copies of the *chrysobullos logos* as it seems to have been handed over to the petitioner—although in the epilogue this version, too, apostrophizes judges and future emperors in a remarkable way[15]—but also a hitherto unpublished parallel version that was obviously destined to be sent to the *dikasteria* and differs from the individual issue mainly in three points: the earlier

[14] The demanding tone of these passages makes one wonder whether the *hypomneseis* and the respective *lyseis* were formulated by the same person, be it that Skylitzes drafted the *lysis* himself, or that the chancery lent a hand with the formulation of the inquiries.

[15] The unusual 'brotherly' apostrophe to the imperial successors appears like a toned down echo of a chrysobull (!) of 1079 AD by which Nikephoros III Botaneiates had tried to bind future emperors to leave the followers and kinsmen of their predecessors alone; see L. Burgmann, 'A law for emperors: observations on a chrysobull of Nikephoros III Botaneiates', *New Constantines. The rhythm of imperial renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th centuries*, ed. P. Magdalino (SPBS, 2, Aldershot, 1994), 247-257.

stage of the case history at the beginning of the *narratio* is only briefly outlined, the *prooimion* is omitted, and the epilogue is transformed into a publication order and placed at the beginning of the document.

It is revealing that both versions of no. 1 found their way into juridical manuscripts.[16] At any rate, the incorporation of our decrees in legal collections is significant. Admittedly, this could happen to any decision of a secular or ecclesiastical authority that was seen fit to serve as a precedent, or rather a model. With most of our decrees, however, this transition was already intended by the decision-making/law-giving emperor. The compilers and copyists thus acted in complete accordance with these intentions when in the headings devised by them they called the decrees almost without exception διάταξις, νεαρά, or λύσις ἐν τάξει νεαρᾶς—νεαρὰ (διάταξις) or (less often) νεαρὸς νόμος = *novella lex* or *constitutio* being from the times of Theodosios II and Justinian I the usual terms for laws passed after the respective codifications.

At this point we should pause to ask the question, to what degree our information about Alexian legislation is reduced or even distorted by the chances of manuscript transmission. We have to admit that, in contrast to the novels of the Macedonian emperors on the one hand, and those of Manuel I on the other, most of Alexios's novels have been transmitted in a rather small number of manuscripts. With the exception of nos. 6 and 11, however, they are extant in at least two manuscripts which do not obviously have a close relation to each other, and many of them are quoted in later laws or legal literature. This purely statistical observation can and must be qualified by some further considerations, however trivial they may be: the manuscript tradition of any text depends on its accessibility and attraction to copyists. When the text is short, the role of compilers who for the first time incorporate it into a larger collection or transfer it from one to another, is of particular importance. In the case of laws these collections were compiled by, and copied for, the judicial personnel. Thus it is only natural that it is mostly those imperial decrees which had been di-

[16] The transmission of the individual issue may be due to the fact that the petitioner happened to be a member of a law-court himself.

rected to the *dikasteria* and/or were of general concern which have been transmitted. Reciprocally, we can be fairly confident that with this 'legislative' type of Alexian decrees we do not have to reckon with substantial losses.

If, therefore, the surviving decrees are representative of, or almost identical with, the whole of Alexios's legislative production, we may assume that Alexios, when asked to decide a legal case (or problem), often chose to make the decision a law, that in his legislation he shows a predilection for matters of judicial procedure, and that after a fairly constant legislative output during the first fifteen years of his reign he seems to have ended this sort of law-giving rather abruptly. Moreover, the representativeness of our material adds weight to some further observations which are less obvious. It will be agreed that the law of procedure represents the most technical part of a legal system. If we take a closer look at our documents, we notice that apart from the pertinent eight decrees, another two are concerned with questions of a rather technical nature. We had already seen that the first part of no. 9 rejects the production of counter-witnesses (ἀντιπαραστατικὴ μαρτυρία) against a certain category of alleged slaves who file a suit for their freedom; the second part discusses (and answers in the negative) the question whether the consecration of a slave's marriage makes him *ipso facto* a free person. Even no. 7 debates the problem whether the new (ecclesiastical) style of betrothal coexists with the old (civilian) style or supersedes it, on a comparatively high technical level.

In the case of those decrees that originate in actual cases these technicalities as well as the strictly procedural ones must have been raised by the interested parties and their advocates. They were then discussed by the members of the court. Unfortunately, the discussions are not always imparted to us in detail: the *hypomnesis* pertaining to no. 2 is lost; no. 4 reports the case history at some length without being too explicit about the legal basis of the argument; no. 6 mentions at least 'the Justinianic novel' introduced by the advocates of one of the parties. In no. 7 the general importance of the subject matter (betrothal) and the rather recent development of pertinent legislation seems to have induced the quotation of some of the rules. Paradoxically, the most elaborate

case is our no. 1: although a *chrysoboullos logos*, which could be cynically interpreted as a personal favour of the emperor to an 'in-law'[17], it not only cites provisions from both divine and secular law, but even contains lengthy quotations of scholia on the Basilica.

Refraining from a reconstruction and dogmatic analysis of these discussions, we shall now try to locate Alexios's legislative activity in the history of Byzantine legislation. Up to now we have stressed the common features of Alexian laws; now we have to admit that those which combine both features, i.e. the procedural content and the origin in an actual case, are still rather few if regarded in absolute numbers. Moreover, the four decrees that fully and unquestionably present those features, represent three different forms of legislation, and it is so far only an assumption that the *hypomnesis-lysis* type should be regarded as archetypal.

A pattern will emerge more clearly when we include Alexios's predecessors in the picture, for Alexios did not invent this kind of law-giving. A decree issued by Michael VII in 1075 AD[18] represents the ideal type of legislation which we have described: it is a *lysis* deciding on an actual legal case. The point at issue is a matter of procedure. The emperor declares his decision to be effective in future, and orders that it be sent to all *dikasteria*, so that everybody takes note of his 'new legislation' (καινὴ νομοθεσία). The *hypomnestikon* describes a highly controversial discussion between judges that was obviously based on different legal provisions, although these are not quoted. Like Skylitzes some years later, the inquiring official, the *megas droungarios* Constantine, who happens to have been the father of the petitioner of our document no. 1,[19] anticipates that the imperial order will be effective 'like a law' (ἀντὶ νόμου).[20] Accordingly, in the headings added by the copyists the *lysis* is called νεαρά.

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[17] The petitioner, Michael, was married to a niece of Alexios; see K. Barzos, *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, I (Thessalonike, 1984), 124.

[18] Coll.IV 6 (Dölger 1004).

[19] See Barzos, *Γενεαλογία Κομνηνῶν*, 122-126 n. 5.

[20] The ἀντί does not mean that the *droungarios* disputes the legislative quality of the imperial *prostaxis*-to-be. Like the expression καινὴ νομοθεσία in the emperor's *lysis* it reflects the inclination of the Byzantines to confine the word

An even earlier specimen might be found in a *lysis* by Constantine X.[21] Unfortunately this has come down to us only in epitomized form. Moreover, its provision is surprising insofar as it considerably restricts the priority of a wife's claim on her dowry over a claim of the fisc from a debt that arose after the matrimonial contract. However, this *lysis*, which was issued in response to an ἀναφορὰ σεκρετική, the inquiring *sekreton* not being specified, and is reported to 'be effective like a novel' (κρατεῖ σήμερον ἐν τύπῳ νεαρᾶς διατάξεως), might well have been influenced by an anonymous contemporary treatise on the ranking of competing claims[22], although the solutions are almost diametrically opposed.

Be it Constantine or Michael, the Doukai bring us closer to that 'magic date' in Byzantine legal history which is constituted by the 'foundation of a law school' under Constantine IX Monomachos. Of course, this was not a *creatio ex nihilo*: the *Peira*, if anything, bears testimony to the high standard of Constantinopolitan jurisdiction in the first half of the eleventh century. Yet, the appointment of John Xiphilinos as *nomophylax* and teacher of law, however short-lived this institutionalization of legal training may have been, seems to have served as an additional stimulus, and surely has contributed to the intensification and propagation of legal studies. In at least one point, however, the expectations expressed in the foundation charter were not fulfilled: rather naively, as we would think, its author had hoped that the official installation of legal teaching would put an end to rivalling opinions on legal matters.[23] Our documents show that, on the contrary, it rather increased the intensity of legal controversies.

The occurrence of heated courtroom discussions would not by itself have forced the presidents of the lawcourts to report a case to the emperor, nor would the transformation of the imperial decision into a general law have been needed. As to the first point, we may suspect that the shift of responsibility was ultimately due

νόμος in secular contexts to the codification, ie the Justinianic corpus or the Basilica.

[21] Coll.IV 3 (Dölger 965).

[22] See L. Burgmann, 'Tractatus de creditis et de teste uno', *Fontes Minores*, 9 (Frankfurt am Main, 1993), 35-80.

[23] See § 5 of the charter (Dölger 863).

to the political weight and social prominence of the parties involved. It should not be overlooked, however, that the emperors gladly accepted the rules of the game and even contributed to the legal argument. The generalisations of the decisions can be regarded as additional proof of the seriousness of the legalistic view. Still, the transformation of actual decisions into general laws needs explaining, all the more so since the majority of the 'new' provisions were not new at all, but either explicitly or implicitly reinstated the Justinianic rules.

If we look back a bit further, we notice that already under the emperors of the Macedonian dynasty legislation had flourished for quite a while. Leo VI had issued an almost Justinianic number of novels, and his successors had continued giving laws, although with lesser frequency. Shortly before the turn of the millennium legislative activities seem to have come to a standstill to be resumed only under the Doukai. I believe that the revival of jurisprudence not only determined the form and content of the laws of the second half of the eleventh century, but was also responsible for the revival of legislation as such. The intense study of the legal literature of the past must have reminded readers that law-giving was among the most distinguished prerogatives of the emperor. At least some of these lawyers seem to have been influential enough to persuade the emperors to exercise this prerogative.

The influence of jurisprudence and jurisdiction on legislation seems to have lasted for less than two generations—in other words, it ceased when the last men who had studied law with Xiphilinos retired from office. Admittedly, this statement is not an explanation, but merely shifts the problem. In this chapter, however, we are not going to speculate upon the causes of the decline of jurisprudence. At any rate, it took another two generations until legal studies partly recovered under John II, who seems to have initiated commentaries on abbreviated collections of both canon and civil law.[24] This programme may well have prepared the ground for Manuel's legislative activity.

[24] John's initiative is explicitly stated in the heading of Aristenos's commentary on the *Synopsis canonum*, whereas it cannot be claimed with certainty for the *Ecloga Basilicorum* of AD 1142.

It appears that the three phases of legislation to be distinguished in the middle Byzantine period were each of them part or consequence of an intensified occupation with the legal tradition as a whole. Yet the form and function of legislation varied, as did the manner of dealing with the older laws. During the bipartite 'Macedonian' phase Leo VI had accompanied the ἀνακάθαρσις τῶν παλαιῶν νόμων by laws of a highly symbolical character,[25] whereas to his successors legislation had served as a political instrument which accordingly lay in the hands of the administration.[26] Symptomatically, most laws of Leo's successors, but only one half of his own novels, were incorporated into the manuscripts of the *Synopsis Basilicorum maior*, a selection of the Basilica that was compiled for practical purposes. Manuel I, sole representative of the third and last phase, partly covered the same subjects in his legislation as his grandfather had done,[27] but he made use of the formal models of legislation offered by Byzantium's Roman past, and added to by his more recent predecessors, in a remarkably different way, preferring laws of Justinianic style to the *lysis*-type ones. Moreover, his legislative efforts 'must be seen in the light of Frederick Barbarossa's prior attempt to use Roman law to claim the Roman inheritance'.[28]

Thus it seems that after the death of Justinian the influence of lawyers on legislation was never so strong as under Alexios's immediate predecessors and Alexios himself.

[25] See Fögen, 'Gesetz', 149-153.

[26] See M.T. Fögen, 'Legislation in Byzantium: a political and a bureaucratic technique', *Law and society in Byzantium: ninth-twelfth centuries*, ed. A.E. Laiou and D. Simon (Washington, DC, 1994), 53-70, esp. 61-70.

[27] See R. Macrides, 'Justice under Manuel I Komnenos: four novels on court business and murder', *Fontes Minores*, 6 (1984), 99-204 (esp. novels I-III).

[28] See Magdalino, *Empire*, 265.

10

The reform edict of 1107

Paul Magdalino

The novel or edict (both terms are admissible) which Alexios issued in June 1107, instructing the patriarch and synod to reform the preaching/teaching standards of the clergy, has long been recognised to be one of the emperor's most significant acts. Yet despite a new edition, translation and commentary by the late Paul Gautier, and despite considerable discussion in recent studies of church and learning in the twelfth century, notably by Jean Darrouzès, Elefteria Papayanni, and Vasilis Katsaros, the precise significance of the document remains far from clear. There is still room for uncertainty as to its effects: did it or did it not set up the 'patriarchal school', whatever this may have been? More seriously, the document has never been studied in its own right, as a piece of legislation which had causes as well as effects. Why did Alexios issue it when he did? We may never be able to answer this question, but only by examining the text in terms of what it meant to its author can we hope to understand what it meant for the Byzantine clergy.[1]

The novel is addressed to the patriarch and synod. The emperor asks them to bear with him, because the danger which threatens the church touches his heart. 'For behold, the souls of the orthodox and especially the more simple-minded are in danger. The priest-

[1] Ed. P. Gautier, 'L'édit d'Alexis Ier Comnène sur la réforme du clergé', *REB*, 31 (1973), 165-227 (text, 179-201); J. Darrouzès, *Recherches sur les ὀφφίκια de l'église byzantine* (Paris, 1970), 72-5; E. Papayanni, *Τά οἰκονομικά τοῦ ἐγγάμου κλήρου στό Βυζάντιο* (Athens, 1986), 78 ff; V. Katsaros, *Ἰωάννης Καστα-μονίτης. Συμβολή στή μελέτη τοῦ βίου, τοῦ ἔργου καί τῆς ἐποχῆς του* (Thessalonike, 1988), 162-209.

hood is the head of the orthodox people, and if it is well, then the whole body and all its parts are brought to well being, but if it is sick, the whole body is set to perish. Behold therefore Christianity is in danger, as the state of the church diminishes daily.' The cause is nothing other than chronic indolence and neglect. What excuse will the bishops and emperors have for this, unless they bestir themselves to right the wrong, and to renew the despised good that has faded through long neglect? Being corruptible men, they have let themselves become prey to material concerns; rarely is a man to be found who devotes himself unceasingly to divine things. 'There is no demand for orthodox preaching, and there is no impulse towards its comprehension.' To hold it in contempt is to cut oneself off from Christ; yet he is close at hand for those who seek him out.

What then is to be done? The first step is to review the clergy of the Great Church, both those 'on the [regular] scale' (ἔμβαθμοι), who receive salaries (ῥόγαι), and the supernumeraries (περισσοί), who live in hope of a vacancy on the scale.[2] All have been recommended as worthy of holy orders, but some do not live up to their reputation, for while they live virtuously and keep God's commandments, they do not have the teaching ability (διδασκαλικὸς λόγος) which is supposed to distinguish those in holy orders from ordinary Christians. Let those who have both praiseworthy character and teaching ability move on to the episcopate and official positions in the patriarchal administration. The others should strive to improve. If they have been ordained on the basis of false references, this will reflect badly on their referees, and it will not help their own chances of promotion, for good references will hardly suffice to confer teaching ability on those who do not have it.

The synod is not, however, to dismiss those clerics who have not lived up to their testimonials, but to encourage them to do better. Above all, the patriarch is to conduct a general survey (ἀδνούμιον κοινόν) of the clergy, recording, on the one hand, those who are qualified by both character and teaching, and, on the other hand, those who fall short in any way. The survey is not to

[2] For discussion, see Papayanni.

be conducted in a perfunctory way, but with great scrutiny (μετὰ ἐρεύνης μεγίστης), and the man who satisfies both requirements is to be distinguished from the others. This way those who are unqualified will be encouraged to emulate those who have been starred. They are to be reviewed not just once, but regularly, and the patriarch is to interview each one individually about his progress since the last review. Those who consistently fail to mend their ways are neither to be promoted to office in the patriarchate nor to be called to the episcopate, and are to lose their present incumbencies, unless they can plead the excuse of old age and infirmity.

So much concerning the present staff of the Great Church. General recruitment of new staff is to cease forthwith, until the clergy is reduced to its prescribed number. There are other ecclesiastical offices to which, if the patriarch wishes, highly-recommended individuals can be appointed to serve the church and prepare themselves for ordination should vacancies occur. However, exception can be made for very highly qualified men to be ordained (presumably to the supernumeraries) even when there is no vacancy.

The promotion of supernumeraries to vacancies in the ranks of the salaried clergy is to be made, as before, on the basis of seniority and not of merit. The promotion blockage for meritorious supernumeraries is to be eased by offering them accelerated promotion through teaching. 'Let those who are worthy in word and deed be brought into the service of teaching, and let them advance through the teacherships (διὰ τῶν διδασκαλείων) to higher office.'

The *didaskaloi* are to receive a salary appropriate to their responsibilities, and the emperor fixes this at 3 lb. of light nomismata and 50 bushels of wheat, 'that they may effectively impart orthodox dogma and good behaviour to the people'. Those *didaskaloi* who want to become priests may do so, and those deacons who do not feel ready to enter the priesthood may continue to serve as *didaskaloi*. They should watch over the neighbourhoods, not only instructing the people and pointing out to them what is right, but restraining those of wayward lifestyle, either by persuasion, or by reporting them to the patriarch, who will then refer the matter to the emperor or to the city authorities, 'whenever, that is, the mat-

ter requires the hand of civil power'. As they go among the populace, they must ensure that people make their confessions to approved spiritual fathers, and they can be of benefit to monks as well as laymen, 'for some of their affairs are also in need of correction'.

Let none of these deacon-*didaskaloi* be reluctant to enter the priesthood, for although this now tends to be considered a step down, it is really an honour. As an incentive, the emperor offers a higher salary (4 lb. nomismata) to those who are ordained priests. Monks or laymen can also become *didaskaloi* when they are better qualified than the clergy. As representatives of the patriarch, the *didaskaloi* are to rank immediately after his officials.

Returning to the subject of the existing clergy who do not come up to the required standards, the emperor defends his leniency. Although their position is canonically unacceptable, it is the result of a long tradition which has become a prevailing custom, and therefore must be corrected through 'exquisite management' (δι' οἰκονομίας ἀρίστης).[3] The emperor insists, however, that he is not condoning uncanonical practice, but urging its correction. He wants, at least in this most necessary matter, to advise and assist the patriarch and synod in bringing goodness to fulfilment.

This reminds him of another recommendation: let the Nomokanon be read out before the synod. Those canons which further the cause of piety and correct dogma should be approved and observed, while the others should be removed and referred to the emperor for consultation as to what should be done with them. In particular, the canon concerning monks who hang around on roads and street corners should be reissued and enforced.

The emperor insists that all this must not just remain a dead letter, but must be translated into immediate action. For he is convinced that God has charged him with reforming the church. Let no-one imagine that he has any personal scores to settle—he simply cannot bear to see the church fall apart.

[3] For the most recent discussion of *oikonomia*, and earlier bibliography, cf. C. Cupane, 'Appunti per uno studio dell'oikonomia ecclesiastica a Bisanzio', *JÖB*, 38 (1988), 53-73.

The patriarch will be even more blessed than he is already if he sees that these things are carried out. The bishops must co-operate with him in regard to all ecclesiastical appointments in which they have a part, whether collectively, as a synod, or as provincial pastors. For this legislation applies not only to Constantinople, but to all the territories under imperial jurisdiction. Since it is fully in accord with the canons, any contravention will be punished as a canonical as well as a legal offence. Worthy priests are to be appointed to village churches, so that they in their turn may enlighten the people and impart orthodox preaching to all. If enough such men are not readily available, the bishops must train them quickly, and make use of itinerant preachers—themselves included, for preaching the faith is their duty as the successors of the apostles, and it is for this that they receive the *kanonikon* from the faithful. If they are conscious of their responsibility, they will not neglect it, for if they do, what excuse will they have on the Day of Judgement? So there is no room for delay or procrastination: may God grant to all of them the strength and will to apply themselves with the necessary zeal.

If we take Alexios at his word, he issued this novel because he felt a duty to save the church from an impending danger to its orthodox faith. That he was genuinely anxious about the Day of Judgement seems clear from more than one indication that he thought that day was not far off: in addition to the evidence of the *Mousai* and his Last Judgement mural in the palace, there is a passage in Zonaras which hints that he might have thought of himself as the Last Roman Emperor of apocalyptic legend.[4] That he sought to eradicate heresy and dissent is very well known from the examples he made of John Italos, Basil the Bogomil, Neilos of Calabria and Theodore Blachernites.[5] The novel belongs in the general con-

[4] John Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν*, XVIII.28.10, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst (CHSB, Bonn, 1897), III, 760; *Mousai*, I, 210-238; Nicholas Kallikles, ed. R. Romano, *Nicola Callicle, carmi* (Naples, 1980); P. Magdalino and R. Nelson, 'The emperor in Byzantine art of the twelfth century', *ByzForsch*, 8 (1982), 124-6, repr. in P. Magdalino, *Tradition and transformation in medieval Byzantium* (London, 1991), VI.

[5] See J. Gouillard, 'Le synodikon de l'orthodoxie: édition et commentaire', *TM*, 2 (1967), 57ff (text), 183ff (commentary); see also the relevant biographical

text of these show trials. Its stated purpose is also very similar to that of the *Panoplia Dogmatike,* the stockpile of texts for the refutation of all known heresies which Alexios commissioned from the monk Euthymios Zigabenos. Like the novel, this addressed itself to heresy in general, and aimed to raise consciousness and vigilance among the orthodox faithful. In the preface to the *Panoply* Zigabenos pointedly remarks that Alexios is not usurping the work of the bishops, but rousing them by his example. 'For when he who is empowered to speak on faith keeps untimely silence, it is necessary that someone should champion the Word in danger—not just the most pious emperor, who gives authority to the decisions of the bishops through his influence (ῥοπή) and good sense (σύνεσις), but any believer. Otherwise, it is as if a man who kills a man-eating wild beast, thereby removing a public menace and delivering the natives from destruction at its hands, were to be indicted because he is not a local'.[6]

This text confirms that Alexios burned with righteous zeal. However, it also suggests that he did so not in deference to the church, but almost in spite of the church, to the extent of wanting to show himself more righteous than the clergy. This is certainly the impression we get from the reform edict. It was not only the culmination of Alexios's own highly authoritarian policy; it is also, without a doubt, the most high-handed piece of imperial legislation on church government that survives from the middle Byzantine period. The emperor presumes to tell the patriarch and synod how to go about their business, and he does so in a hectoring and patronising tone which seems to question their motivation and their competence. It is hard to avoid the suspicion that a large part of Alexios's purpose in issuing the novel was to assert his supremacy in religious matters—to proclaim that church reform was far too important to be left to churchmen, and had to be part of his programme of imperial renewal. Indeed, it might be inferred from a recently published oration that Alexios was trying to take the

notices in B. Skoulatos, *Les personnages byzantins de l'Alexiade; analyse prosopographique et synthèse* (Louvain, 1980).

[6] *PG*, 126, 21-4.

credit for something which the patriarch had already instituted.[7] The novel is certainly the most explicit statement issued by Alexios, or for that matter any Komnenian emperor, to the effect that his regime represented a *renovatio* or ἀνακαίνισις. In the novel Alexios presents himself much as Anna and other apologists presented him: as an example of diligence (ἐπιμέλεια) who seeks to reverse the damage done by the indolence and neglect of his predecessors, and to restore the empire to its ancient greatness.[8] The only precedents for such an imperial effort to regulate the clergy of the Great Church of Constantinople are to be found in the legislation of Justinian and Heraclius.[9]

Interestingly, however, the novel of 1107 does not obviously echo these precedents. If Alexios was conscious of imitating Justinian and Heraclius, he did not make the most of it. He was evidently not concerned to be seen to legislate within a legislative tradition. The document's lack of a proper prooimion and its generally loose and repetitive argumentation suggest rather unprofessional drafting, which is puzzling in view of Anna's information that at this time her father's *prostagmata* were drawn up by John Taronites, whom she characterises as an expert in Roman law and skilled in dialectic.[10] Alexios may even have composed it in person. At any rate, it seems unlikely that this was merely a showpiece of legislation, and we can therefore exclude the possibility that Alexios issued the novel *solely* as an ideological demonstration of imperial authority over the church. His insistence that the situation is urgent, and that the novel is not to remain a dead letter, confirms that he meant business. Whatever his motives (and we shall return to them) his practical intentions as outlined in the text

[7] J. Darrouzès, 'L'éloge de Nicolas III par Nicolas Mouzalon', *REB*, 46 (1988), 5-53.

[8] Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, VI.xi.3, XII.v.2, XIV.iii.9, vii.1-2, XV.x.5, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols (Paris, 1945-1967), II, 73, III, 68, 158-9, 173, 229, tr. E.R.A. Sewter (Harmondsworth, 1988), 205-6, 381, 448, 458-9, 504-5. Cf. also the pro-Alexios account reproduced by the 'Sathas Anonymous' (Theodore Skoutariotes?), *MB*, VII, 183.

[9] Justinian: Nov. 3, 16, 43, 57, 59; Heraclius: J. Konidaris, 'Die Novellen des Kaisers Herakleios', *Fontes Minores*, 5 (1982), 33-106. Cf. Papayanni, 49-67.

[10] *Al.*, XIII.i.3, L, III, 88, S, 396 (mistranslation).

have a ring of truth to the modern academic reader. The patriarch was directed to institute a staff appraisal scheme, with a view to stimulating improved, competitive performance. The tenure of those already in post was not to be abolished, but new appointments were to be conditional on good behaviour. Vacancies were not to be filled until numbers had returned to an acceptable level. On the other hand, government funding was to be made available for a number of 'new blood' appointments which offered junior, non-tenured staff the incentive of accelerated promotion to senior grades. The reforms that Alexios was urging translate all too easily into these chillingly topical terms, which give us some idea of what the Byzantine clergy were up against.

In studying the effects of the novel, modern scholars have concentrated almost exclusively on the question of the *didaskaleia*, the teaching posts. They have not even raised the more basic question of whether the appraisal scheme as a whole was actually implemented. The question is admittedly hard to answer, since there is no direct evidence for a review of the clergy at this time. However, the effects of some such review may perhaps be discerned in the appearance of ὁ τοῦ surnames among the clergy of the capital in the twelfth century. It is clear from a letter of John Tzetzes that this form of nomenclature was used in the official clerical lists to identify deacons by reference to the sponsors (usually but not invariably their uncles) who had put them forward for ordination. Given the way in which Alexios's novel insists on the need for sponsors to produce accurate testimonials, and for sponsees to live up to their recommendations, it could be that ὁ τοῦ surnames became more regular as a result of an effort to apply stricter controls.[11]

At least there is nothing to suggest that the appraisal scheme outlined by Alexios was **not** carried out. There is also no reason to believe that his proposal for a review of the Nomokanon remained

[11] John Tzetzes, ep. 106, ed. P.A.M. Leone, *Epistulae* (Leipzig, 1972), 153. The best known examples are: Niketas ὁ τοῦ Σερρῶν, Michael ὁ τοῦ Θεσσαλονίκης, Michael ὁ τοῦ Ἀγχιάλου, Eustathios ὁ τοῦ Καταφλῶρον, for whom see the prosopographical entries by R. Browning, 'The patriarchal school at Constantinople in the twelfth century', *B*, 32 (1962), 167-201; 33 (1963), 11-40, repr. in R. Browning, *Studies on Byzantine history, literature and education* (London, 1977), X.

a dead letter: the twelfth century was, after all, uniquely productive in canon law commentaries, two of which, those of Zonaras and Balsamon, addressed the problem of obsolete and contradictory legislation.[12] We should therefore not be too sceptical about the effectiveness of Alexios's provisions regarding the *didaskaloi*. The basic problem here is to decide what connection, if any, existed between the *didaskaloi* envisaged in the novel and the hierarchy of three scriptural *didaskaloi*—the διδάσκαλος τοῦ Ψαλτῆρος, the διδάσκαλος τοῦ Ἀποστόλου, and διδάσκαλος τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου—which emerged in the course of the twelfth century at the centre of the ecclesiastical and cultural establishment. Did Alexios, intentionally or otherwise, set up these teaching posts in the form in which they were later occupied by such well known writers as Michael Italikos, George Tornikes, Nikephoros Basilakes, Michael ὁ τοῦ Θεσσαλονίκης, John Kastamonites and Constantine Stilbes? In other words, can Alexios be credited with creating the institutional framework of that elaborate and distinctive Greek literary culture of the late twelfth century which has evoked such contrary reactions from modern scholars?[13] A further, related question is whether the *didaskaloi*, whether as envisaged in the novel or as they actually emerged, belonged to a patriarchal school in which an academic curriculum was taught, culminating in theological studies.[14]

In one obvious and fundamental respect, the careers of the *didaskaloi* known to us match those envisaged by the novel. The novel provides primarily for a group of ambitious and talented deacons pushing for promotion, and this is exactly what the scriptural *didaskaloi* were: Italikos, Tornikes, Kastamonites and Stilbes all went on to occupy important metropolitan sees. It may also be

[12] See R. Macrides, 'Nomos and Kanon on paper and in court', *Church and people in Byzantium*, ed. R. Morris (Birmingham, 1990), 61-85, esp. 71.

[13] Negative: R. Browning, 'Enlightenment and repression in Byzantium in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *P&P*, 69 (1975), 23, repr. in Browning, *Studies*, XV; C. Mango, *Byzantium. The empire of new Rome* (London, 1980), 146. Positive: A.P. Kazhdan and A.W. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1985), ch. 6.

[14] The classic study is Browning, 'Patriarchal school'; see also Katsaros, *Καστταμονίτης*, and bibliography cited there.

significant that the *didaskalos tou Apostolou* is first attested as a signatory to a document of 1116.[15] Against this may be set the difficulty of dating the appearance of the *didaskalos tou Euangeliou*; there is some indication that the post, if not the name, was in existence before 1107, and the novel does seem to refer to the *didaskaleia* as familiar institutions.[16] Then again, there are some worrying discrepancies between the *didaskaloi* of the novel and the known twelfth-century examples. The novel seems to speak of imperial funding, yet the inaugural orations of some scriptural *didaskaloi* address the patriarch as paymaster.[17] They also indicate that salaries were graded according to seniority, whereas the novel stipulates a flat rate of payment, with a bonus for priests. Although the novel refers to the number of *didaskaloi*, it does seem to envisage more than three. Most importantly, it clearly envisages a team of preachers who will bring orthodoxy to the people. It is hard to imagine anything less meaningful to those of little faith, or little brain, than the surviving *didaskaliai* of the scriptural *didaskaloi*. These are highly rhetorical tours de force which would have been lost on anyone who did not know the Scriptures and the Fathers reasonably well.[18]

As might be expected, modern scholars have dealt with the evidence in very different ways. The distinguished historians of the patriarchal school and the orthodox church in the Byzantine empire have very prudently given the problem a wide berth.[19] Tiftixoglu observed cautiously, but positively, that the emperor's

[15] Ed. Th. Uspensky, *IRAIK*, 5 (1900) 29; V. Grumel, *Les regestes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople, I; Les actes des patriarches, fasc. II et III: Les regestes de 715 à 1206*, 2nd. ed., revised and corrected by J. Darrouzès (Paris, 1989), no. 1001. Cf., however, Darrouzès, *Ὀφφίκια*, 519, for the possibility of a later date for the signature.

[16] Gautier, 'L'édit', 191; see also P. Gautier, *Théophylacte d'Achrida, lettres* (CFHB, 16/2, Thessalonike, 1986), 94-6, and cf. Darrouzès, *Ὀφφίκια*, 71-2.

[17] Papayanni, 160 ff.

[18] Most surviving *didaskaliai* are preserved in the famous Escorial manuscript of c. 1200, Scor. gr. Y-II-10. Those of John Kastamonites are analysed by Katsaros, 213-42.

[19] Browning, 'Patriarchal school', 167ff; J.M. Hussey, *The orthodox church in the Byzantine empire* (Oxford, 1986), 146.

ordinance 'seems to have fallen on fertile soil'.[20] Darrouzès concluded, with equal caution, that 'la novelle de 1107 n'est pas étrangère a la floraison remarquable des didascales au XIIe siècle'.[21] When Gautier came to re-edit the text, however, he became convinced that the teachers with whom it was concerned, 'n'ont rien à voir avec les trois didascales bien connus de la Grande Église'.[22] So things stood for ten years from 1974. But since then, Michael Angold and Elefteria Papayanni have revived the suggestion that the three scriptural teacherships were at least an end product of Alexios's legislation.[23] Vasilis Katsaros goes much further. In his monograph on John Kastamonites, one of the most prominent and prolific twelfth-century *didaskaloi*, he devotes a whole chapter to the patriarchal school, in which he is a true believer, and which he connects very closely with the novel of 1107.[24] His is the most thorough discussion to date, and he makes two notable contributions to the debate.

First, he proposes that there were two groups of *didaskaloi*: an inner, 'academic' elite consisting of the hierarchy just described, and a band of 'popular' preachers, mainly priests, who relayed the message to the people. This suggestion is based on the rather unlikely testimony of the fourteenth-century historian Nikephoros Gregoras, and Katsaros adduces no twelfth-century evidence in support of it.[25] However, supporting evidence can perhaps be found in the history of John Kinnamos. In his account of the doctrinal controversy of 1155-6 which led to the downfall of Michael ὁ τοῦ Θεσσαλονίκης and Nikephoros Basilakes, Kinnamos relates how the controversy began when these two learned *didaskaloi* took offence at remarks made by a deacon called Basil, who was 'entrusted with unfolding the Voice of God to the common people

[20] V. Tiftixoglu, 'Gruppenbildungen innerhalb des konstantinopolitischen Klerus während der Komnenenzeit', *BZ*, 62 (1969), 54.

[21] Darrouzès, *Ὀφφίκια*, 78.

[22] Gautier, 'L'édit', 172.

[23] M. Angold, *The Byzantine empire, 1025-1204. A political history* (London, 1984), 123; Papayanni, 161.

[24] Katsaros, 179ff.

[25] Katsaros, 191.

at all divine celebrations, wherever they occurred'.[26] Here we seem to see the division, and the rivalry, between 'academic' and 'popular' *didaskaloi* in the aftermath of Alexios's reform.

Katsaros's other main contribution has been to redirect attention to the fact that the three Scriptural *didaskaloi* stood at the head of a larger teaching hierarchy, part of which, at least, had already been in existence before 1107. He cites the texts in which two *didaskaloi*, Michael ὁ τοῦ Θεσσαλονίκης and Constantine Stilbes, allude to their tenure of two inferior and 'exterior' positions before ascending to the inner sanctum of the big three.[27] He correctly infers that they had previously been engaged in teaching a secular curriculum at 'out-stations' of the Great Church. However, he over-interprets the evidence in concluding that there was a fixed hierarchy of five posts corresponding to five different locations. The 'inaugural' of Michael ὁ τοῦ Θεσσαλονίκης cannot be made to yield the information that he taught at five churches: the Theotokos at the Chalkoprateia, St Peter, St Paul at the Orphanage, Christ at the Chalke and Hagia Sophia. I understand Michael to be saying that he taught the 'outer' learning at the Chalkoprateia and the Chalke before entering Hagia Sophia to rise through the threefold hierarchy of Scriptural appointments.[28] As for Stilbes, he ap-

[26] John Kinnamos, *Ἐπιτομὴ τῶν κατορθωμάτων*, IV. 16: ed. A. Meineke (CSHB, Bonn, 1836), 177-6.

[27] Katsaros, 198-204, referring to editions by J. Lefort, 'Prooimion de Michel neveu de l'archevêque de Thessalonique, didascale de l'Évangile', *TM*, 4 (1970), 375-93, and J. Diethart, *Der Rhetor und Didaskalos Konstantinos Stilbes* (Diss., Vienna, 1971). The *didaskalia* of Stilbes has now been published in an edition by Lia Rafaella Cresci, *La prolusione del Maestro dell' Apostolo* (Messina, 1987).

[28] Katsaros's construction is based on two misconceptions: (1), derived from Browning, that the expression ἀκρογωνιαῖος λίθος (11. 66-7) is an allusion to the church of St Peter; (2) that a sentence mentioning St Paul and an acropolis (11. 83-4) alludes to the church of St Paul at the *Orphanotropheion*. Christ, not Peter, is the corner-stone (1 Peter 2. 1-6), and the allusion in the first instance must therefore be to the Chalke. In the second instance, Michael is describing, in three interwoven metaphors, the three stages of his promotion as a Scriptural teacher: first he lays the foundation by meeting David at the outer gate of bronze (he becomes Teacher of the Psalter); then he builds the walls, and enters the city of Sion, the place of silver and gold, with Paul (i.e. as Teacher

pears to say only that he taught at the Orphanage and the Chalke before becoming attached to the Great Church. The only conclusion we can draw is that the three Scriptural *didaskaloi* were attached to Hagia Sophia, and that promotion to their ranks was made **from among** the teachers of profane learning who had taught at two out of **at least three** outer locations.[29] In other words, the fact that a successful *didaskalos* normally went through five appointments does not necessarily mean that the college of *didaskaloi* was limited to five members.

As it happens, in concentrating on the number five, Katsaros has overlooked much that points to the number twelve. Apart from the well-known reference by Anselm of Havelberg to twelve *didaskaloi*,[30] and a slightly later, still unpublished reference to a college of twelve sophists,[31] Stilbes likens himself and his colleagues to the twelve tribes of Israel.[32] To these references may now be added the evidence of Nicholas Mouzalon's oration to the patriarch Nicholas III (the patriarch to whom Alexios's novel is addressed), recently published by Darrouzès.[33] The patriarch, says Mouzalon, is another Moses, 'except insofar as he does not smash the Tablets of God-written words, but promotes them, and promotes men capable of resolving the complexities of their composition (τὰς πλοκὰς τῶν πλοκῶν) as they bombard the congregation with teachings (διδασκαλίαις)'. Mouzalon goes on to characterise these teachers (among whom he includes himself) as 'strong voiced and sobering guardians', and later as 'beast-fighting dogs; they bay at length against ignorance of the Scriptures, and drive

of the Epistles); now, finally, he adds the roof and ascends to the acropolis as Teacher of the Gospel. Although he may well be implying that he became Teacher of the Psalter while still attached to the Chalke church, it is clear that he alludes to only three churches in all.

[29] To the eight locations listed by Browning, 'Patriarchal school', 170-8, we can probably now add the Blachernai, where (as at the Forty Martyrs) there was a school of notaries: Iviron. no 49, ed. J. Lefort, N. Oikonomides, D. Papachryssanthou and H. Métrévéli, *Actes d'Iviron*, II (Archives de l'Athos, 16, Paris, 1990), 192, and cf. no. 46, ibid., 169.

[30] *PL*, 188, 1162.

[31] Scor. gr. Y-II-10, fol. 325r.; P. Wirth, in *XV Int. Cong.*, II. 1 (Athens, 1976), 15.

[32] Ed. Cresci, 45, 52.

[33] Darrouzès, 'L'éloge' (see above, n. 7), 51-53.

the mother-wolf, ripper of souls, like any ravaging wolf from the sheepfold .... You have these as dogs against wild beasts, and you send them forth as reapers to harvest. **These your twelve** (δωδεκάδα τὴν σὴν), the elite of Christ, you send forth unto Samaria, to reveal the breadth of the Scriptures. They are both your mouth and the sound of your voice. The people who dwelt in darkness are now enlightened; all are instructed in God. Small and great know the Lord, and the Lord is praised in his churches'. This looks like an unmistakable reference to the *didaskaloi* of the novel, with a fairly heavy hint that there were twelve of them. We can only guess why Mouzalon fails to mention the novel—was it not part of his rhetorical brief, was he studiously ignoring it, or had it not yet been issued?

Despite this uncertainty, the oration is a significant addition to the dossier. It may help to explain why the novel seems to take the *didaskaleia* for granted—if so, there is no need to postulate a second novel regulating the appointments in greater detail.[34] The oration also confirms that the *didaskaloi* were meant to expound the orthodox interpretation of Scripture for the benefit of all the faithful, and not just to theology students. Here it is unfortunate that Katsaros has chosen to follow those who regard the *didaskaloi* as the 'theology faculty' of the 'patriarchal school'. There can be no doubt that they were highly academic men who rose to their posts through careers in education. To that extent the term 'patriarchal school', a modern invention, is justified. But there is no direct evidence that the *didaskaloi* taught theology, in lecture rooms, to students, in the way they taught rhetoric or philosophy.[35] Passages in

[34] As does Katsaros, 190.

[35] The one positive indication known to me is a passage in the autobiographical poem of Nicholas Mouzalon, describing his position before he became archbishop of Cyprus (1107?). Nicholas says that he spent his time either immersed in his books, or standing up in church uttering words of salvation, and he goes on to specify:

> ἦν γὰρ τὸ λειτούργημα τοῦτό μοι τότε
> ἐκκλησιάζειν ἐν χρόνοις ὡρισμένοις
> καὶ νουθετεῖν τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐκκλησίας
> τρέφειν γραφαῖς τε τῆς ἐμῆς τροφοῦ βρέφη,

their writings which are cited as indicative of a teaching situation can just as easily be taken to indicate a preaching situation, or, better still, a **performance** situation.[36] The *prooimia* and *didaskaliai* of the twelfth-century *didaskaloi* belong in spirit, style, content and manuscript tradition to the corpus of epideictic rhetoric from that period. They have much in common with imperial orations, and one *didaskalia* from 1169 is in fact a celebration of the birth of Alexios II.[37] There are two pieces of evidence which I regard as decisive. One is a letter in which Michael Italikos reveals that part of his job as Teacher of the Epistles was to broadcast, and enhance, the victory bulletins sent to the Great Church from the emperor's headquarters. Referring to John II's victories in Cilicia in 1137, he recalls that with the sound of the news still ringing in his ears, he ascended the teaching rostrum (ἀνῆλθον ἐπὶ τοὺς τῆς διδασκαλίας ὀκρίβαντας) and passed the word on to the people.[38] The other is an unpublished oration written by the *megas droungarios* Gregory Antiochos to celebrate the consecration of the patriarch Basil Kamateros in 1183. Gregory says, 'already many of the *didaskaloi*, evangelising in churches throughout this imperial city...each

ed. S. Doanidou, 'Η παραίτησις Νικολάου τοῦ Μουζάλονος ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Κύπρου', *Ἑλληνικά*, 7 (1934), 116. 155ff. Even this, however, could be taken to refer to 'in-service training', rather than formal education. There is an apparent reference to a lecture-room in the *didaskalia* by Stilbes, which according to the lemma as printed in the recent edition by Cresci was delivered ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ διδασκαλείῳ. But διδασκαλείῳ is a tendentious emendation of the manuscript's διδασκαλικῷ, which is either neuter, meaning 'teaching position', or masculine, qualifying θρόνῳ (understood). In any case, διδασκαλεῖον does not have to refer to a room, as is clear from Alexios's novel.

[36] Cf. M. Mullett, 'Aristocracy and patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople', *The Byzantine aristocracy, IX to XIII centuries*, ed. M. Angold (BAR Int. Ser., 211, Oxford, 1984), 174-175.

[37] Speech by the *oikoumenikos didaskalos* Skizenos, ed. W. Regel, *Fontes rerum byzantinarum* (St Petersburg, 1892-1917), 362-69.

[38] Ed. P. Gautier, *Michel Italikos, lettres et discours* (Paris, 1972), 233; cf. 257. That ὀκρίβας denotes the ambo, and not some specialised piece of teaching furniture, is confirmed by the use of this word in a patriarchal document of 1171: ed. V. Laurent, in *EO*, 33 (1934), 310-311; Grumel-Darrouzès, *Regestes*, no.1119.

mounting the rostrum to which he has been consecrated (τοῦ λαχόντος αὐτὸν ἱεροπρεπῶς ὀκρίβαντος ἀναβαίνοντες) have raised their voices. And I, being present at many of their teachings (διδαχαῖς), gladly joined their audiences out of a desire to hear your praises'.[39] So, not lecturing to students from a rostrum in a classroom, but public oratory—a combination of homily and propaganda—from the ambo of the church which the *didaskalos* ascended in his capacity as the delegate of the local bishop. That the *didaskalos* tended to address himself to people who were already 'in the know' does not make him a theology professor.

Having reminded ourselves what the 'patriarchal school' was not, we must now return to consider whether it was the fulfilment of Alexios's legislation. It seems to me that two very different answers to this question are possible. If we take the novel at its word, we have to conclude that the 'patriarchal school' was a perversion of the emperor's intentions. He had wanted a team of dynamic preachers to root out heresy; what finally emerged was a hierarchy of vain and contentious intellectuals who were only interested in talking to their peers. If, however, we look critically at the novel's alarmist argumentation, we may conclude that Alexios got more or less what he wanted: an opportunity to remind the church of his political and moral superiority, and to earn the gratitude of learned and ambitious clerics suffering from a promotion blockage. In this view, the scriptural *didaskaloi* of later decades can be seen as representing the ascendancy of precisely that section of the church whom Alexios expected to benefit from his legislation.

There is something to be said for both answers. Mouzalon's oration to Nicholas III seems to confirm that the *didaskaloi* as originally constituted conformed much more closely to Alexios's specifications than did the scriptural *didaskaloi* of the mid-twelfth century. Although we lack all evidence for any transformation, we can make a good guess at when it occurred. The most likely period, to my mind, is the long patriarchate of Nicholas III's successor, John IX Agapetos (1112-1136). Unlike Nicholas, John was not a monk, but had risen through the ranks of the patriarchal clergy. To judge from the relative paucity of his *regestes*, he was not notable

[39] Scor. gr. Y-II-10, fol. 250r.

for any ascetic reforming zeal. He was, however, notable as a learned writer of homilies, and as a patron of learning—Theodore Prodromos records that he bought up private libraries and had them copied for the benefit of poor scholars who could not afford books. Altogether, he seems to be the sort of patriarch who might have felt more comfortable with careerist intellectuals than with zealous evangelicals. It may also be worth noting that most of his patriarchate fell during the reign of John II, who seems, on the whole, to have left the church alone.[40]

On the other hand, it is important to note that Alexios himself was not unsympathetic to the careerism of the deacons of the Great Church. As Tiftixoglu has shown, he early in his reign formed an alliance with the cathedral clergy against the metropolitans in the synod.[41] The novel of 1107 was a renewal of this alliance. It positively encourages the ambitions of the brightest and best deacons. Its repeated emphasis that clerics must have teaching ability is tantamount to saying that only the educated deserve to get ahead. It may therefore very plausibly be seen as a measure designed to provide better opportunities for educated men. The emperor, in effect, forced the church to show a higher intellectual profile. The scriptural *didaskaloi* as they later emerged were broadly consistent with the spirit in which Alexios had legislated.

So which answer is correct? If we now look at the novel in its historical setting, we can find room for both of them. The threat from popular heresy was probably plausible enough in 1107 to justify a reform of preaching standards and the creation of a team of professional, inquisitorial preachers. The emperor's earlier persecution had removed the leadership of the Bogomil movement in Constantinople—Basil and his twelve 'disciples'.[42] But it had not removed the real or imaginary danger of heresy in the monasteries, where dualism threatened to lurk undetected under the guise of traditional mysticism and asceticism. In recent years (how re-

[40] Grumel-Darrouzès, *Regestes*, 457-65; Zonaras, III, 751; Nikephoros Xanthopoulos, in *PG*, 147, 460C. K. Manaphes, Θεοδώρου τοῦ Προδρόμου λόγος εἰς τὸν πατριάρχην Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Ἰωάννην Θ' τὸν Ἀγαπητόν, *EEBS*, 41 (1974), 223-42, esp. 239-41.

[41] Tiftixoglu, 'Gruppenbildungen', 33-53.

[42] *Al.*, XV.ix.2, L, III, 224, S, 497.

cent is something of a problem), vagrant Athonite monks, using the spurious excuse of a patriarchal interdict on the Holy Mountain, had migrated to Constantinople, where the authorities regarded them as subversives.[43] It is significant that Alexios instructs the *didaskaloi* to inspect the credentials of popular confessors—who were commonly monks—and, in recommending revision of the Nomokanon, singles out the legislation concerning monastic vagrants. It is also of interest that Alexios did not recruit his preachers from the spiritual elite of the monastic order, but from the intellectual elite of the sacerdotal hierarchy, which he calls the 'head of the orthodox'. This clear preference for working through the secular clergy is all the more striking in view of Alexios's initial benevolence towards monks, one of whom, Euthymios Zigabenos, had become his main collaborator in the refutation of Bogomilism.[44] One wonders whether the passing of Anna Dalassene soon after 1100 had anything to do with Alexios's apparent change of attitude. At any rate, when anti-Bogomil persecution next surfaces in the sources, in the 1140s, it is a clear case of the sacerdotal clergy persecuting monastic holy men.[45]

Whatever the dimensions of the Bogomil threat in 1107, it was not the only cloud on Alexios's orthodox horizon. There was still the unfinished business of John Italos, whose trial had left a bitter legacy in intellectual circles, where some of the master's pupils were still at large. Although the thrust of Alexios's reform was aimed at popular rather than intellectual dissent, it sought to employ those members of society who were most susceptible to the siren sounds of Neoplatonism. In a sense, therefore, the novel offered a solution to the legacy of Italos in that it, so to speak, invited the wolves to become sheepdogs. Again, it is instructive to look ahead to the middle of the century when, in the controversy of

[43] Ph. Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster* (Leipzig, 1894), 163-84; Grumel-Darrouzès, *Regestes*, nos. 973-6, 983-5.

[44] In addition to the *Panoplia Dogmatike*, cited above n. 6, see *Al.*, XV.viii.9, L, III, 223, S, 500.

[45] Grumel-Darrouzès, *Regestes*, nos. 1007-8, 1011-12, 1014-15, 1020, 1020a. For the date of Anna Dalassene's death, see Skoulatos, *Les personnages*, 22.

1155-6, we find two scriptural *didaskaloi* on the losing, 'platonising' side.[46]

None of this, however, quite explains the precise timing of Alexios's novel, or its strong note of urgency. No persecutions of heretics or dissidents are recorded for 1107. The year was nevertheless a critical one for Alexios, for it was in that October that Bohemond finally launched his long-awaited second invasion of Epiros. The relative ease with which Alexios eventually contained this invasion should not lead us to underestimate the danger it posed—Anna certainly did not.[47] Both sides made elaborate diplomatic and military preparations.[48] The reform novel was issued as the 'phoney war' was reaching a climax. Is there a connection? It would be difficult to argue that Alexios reformed his church in an effort to persuade Pope Paschal II to withhold his blessing from Bohemond's crusade. But there might be something in the idea that Alexios wanted to persuade the Latins that the Greek prelates whom he intended to put into the reconquered sees of Syria and Palestine were worthy of their hire: one of the stipulations of the Treaty of Devol was, after all, that the patriarch of Antioch should be 'from among the nurselings' (ἐκ τῶν θρεμμάτων) of the Great Church of Constantinople.[49] Closer to home, Alexios may well have felt the need to remind his church and people of his commitment to orthodoxy. It is also conceivable that an unstated task of the new *didaskaloi* was to preach political obedience, and to report on political disaffection, among a subject population whose loyalty could by no means be taken for granted. Anna tells us that

[46] Michael ὁ τοῦ Θεσσαλονίκης, Teacher of the Gospel, and Nikephoros Basilakes, Teacher of the Epistles; cf. A. Angelou, *Nicholas of Methone. Refutation of Proclus' Elements of Theology* (Athens, 1984), xxi, lviii-lix, lxii-lxiii.

[47] *Al.*, XII.v.3, viii.8, ix.1-3, 7, XIII.i.1, L, III, 68-9, 81-3, 84-5, 87, S, 380-1, 391-5.

[48] *Al.*, XII.i.1-6, ii.1, iii.1, iv.1-4, viii.5, XIII.ii.1, L, III, 53-6, 59-60, 64-6, 79-80, 91-2, S, 369-72, 374, 378-9, 380-2, 389-90, 398-9; Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Aecclesiastica*, XI. 12: ed. M. Chibnall, VI (Oxford, 1978), 68-73. Cf. J. G. Rowe, 'Paschal II, Bohemund of Antioch and the Byzantine empire', *BJRL*, 49 (1966-7), 165-202, esp. 182ff; R.-J. Lilie, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten* (Munich, 1981), 66-7. Although none of the sources say so, the marriage alliance with Hungary was probably occasioned by the threat from Bohemond: F. Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni* (Budapest, 1989), 14-15.

[49] *Al.*, XIII.xii. 20, L, III, 134, S, 431.

her father lived in constant fear of treason before and during the campaign—a fear that led him to settle for a less advantageous peace than he wanted.[50] Is it not revealing that she makes the mistake of placing the Anemas conspiracy in the winter of 1106-7?[51] Orderic Vitalis tells us that Bohemond had some prominent Byzantine defectors in his camp.[52] As Jonathan Shepard has recently reminded us, it was Greek versus Greek.[53] Alexios needed all the propaganda he could get. It was quite in keeping with the spirit of his reform that the Scriptural *didaskaloi* of later years should spend much of their time delivering imperial encomia.

[50] *Al.*, XIII.viii.6, L, III, 116, S, 417.

[51] *Al.*, XII.v.4-vi.9, L, III, 69-75, S, 382-6. For the correct date (1100-2), see D. Papachryssanthou, 'La date de la mort du sébastokrator Isaac Comnène, frère d'Alexis Ier, et de quelques événements contemporains', *REB*, 21 (1963), 250-5, esp. 254; Skoulatos, *Les personnages*, 200.

[52] See above, n. 48.

[53] J. Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek: Alexius Comnenus and Bohemond in 1097-8', *BMGS*, 12 (1988), 185-277.

11

Alexios Komnenos, holy men and monasteries

Pamela Armstrong

In 1088 Alexios I Komnenos issued a chrysobull granting the island of Patmos, together with an annual allowance of flour, to the peripatetic ascetic Christodoulos and a group of monks.[1] Cyril Phileotes was granted fiscal independence for his brother's monastery near Derkos in Thrace by Alexios in 1091.[2] On the same occasion, Alexios gave the saint five pounds of gold to distribute to the poor, and one pound for the monastery.[3] The emperor was apparently in a generous mood when he granted Meletios of Myoupolis 422 gold pieces annually for the upkeep of his twenty-six monasteries on Mount Kithairon on the borders of Attika and Boiotia.[4] A treasured icon supposedly painted by the Evangelist Luke himself was given to Esaias for his newly-founded monastery of the Theotokos Kykkou on Cyprus.[5] Another ascetic holy man, Bartholo-

[1] F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, VI (Vienna, 1890), XIII, 44-48.

[2] Nicholas Kataskepenos, *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία καὶ μερικὴ θαυμάτων διήγησις τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Κυρίλλου τοῦ Φιλεώτου*, ed. E. Sargologos, *La vie de saint Cyrille le Philéote, moine byzantin*, ch. 47.8 (SubsHag, 39, Brussels, 1964), 231-232.

[3] *VCyril*, chs. 47.8, 48, ed. Sargologos, 232, 235-236.

[4] Theodore Prodromos, Βίος τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Μελετίου τοῦ νέου, ed. tr. P. Armstrong, *The Lives of Meletios of Myoupolis* (BBTT, 3, Belfast, forthcoming), ch. 15, ed. V. Vasilievskii, 'Βίοι Μελετίου τοῦ νέου', *PPSb*, 6.2 (1886), 49.20.

[5] R.M. Dawkins, *Leontios Makhairas, Recital concerning the sweet land of Cyprus entitled 'Chronicle', with a translation and notes*, II (Oxford, 1932), 36-39;

mew of Semeri, left Constantinople weighed down with manuscripts, icons and chalices, gifts from Alexios and Eirene, to adorn his recent monastic foundation dedicated to the *Hodegetria* near Rossano in Calabria.[6] He sent gifts to the monastery of Monte Cassino and other places in Italy, and is associated with the foundation of a monastery at Civitot, which was subordinated to Cluny.[7]

This chapter examines Alexios's patronage of holy men and monasteries; it does not attempt to cover comprehensively his monastic policy, if such a policy existed.[8] The Komnenian dynasty instigated a number of monastic foundations: Alexios's mother founded Christ Pantepoptes in Constantinople, Eirene, his wife, founded the Theotokos Kecharitomene and Christ Philanthropos, both also in the capital; his son John and his wife Eirene were responsible for the Pantokrator in Constantinople, while his younger son Isaac rebuilt the Chora *katholikon* near the Blachernai palace, and founded the Panagia Kosmosoteira, near the village of Pherrai in western Thrace. (Alexios would have been aware of only the first three of these.) Alexios himself is associated with the Christ Philanthropos foundation, where he was buried.[9] Perhaps more in

Ephraim, patriarch of Jerusalem, *Περιγραφὴ τῆς σεβασμίας καὶ βασιλικῆς μονῆς τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τοῦ Κύκκου* (Venice, 1751), 24-32.

[6] *Vita Bartolomaei*, inc. *Μεγίστης ὄντως ὠφελείας καὶ πολλοῦ τοῦ κατὰ ψύχην κέρδους ἡ τῶν θείων ἀνδρῶν πολιτεία*, ch. 3, AASS, Sept. VIII, 821.

[7] See J. Shepard above, 121, for more about these and full references.

[8] For a wider view of Alexios and monasteries see R. Morris, *Monks and laymen in Byzantium, 843-1118* (Cambridge, 1995), ch. 10.

[9] Pantepoptes: R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, I, *La siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique*, III, *Les églises et les monastères*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1969), 513-515; Kecharitomene: Janin, *Églises et monastères*, 188-191 and *Τυπικὸν τῆς σεβασμίας μονῆς τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς Κεχαριτωμένης τῆς ἐκ βάθρων νεουργηθείσης καὶ συστάσης παρὰ τῆς εὐσεβεστάτης αὐγούστης κυρᾶς Εἰρήνης τῆς Δουκαίνης κατὰ τὴν αὐτῆς πρόσταξιν καὶ γνώμην ὑφηγηθέν τε καὶ ἐκτεθέν*, ed. P. Gautier, Le *typikon* de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè', *REB*, 43 (1985), 5-165; Philanthropos: Janin, Églises et monastères, 525-527; Pantokrator: *Τυπικὸν τῆς βασιλικῆς μονῆς τοῦ Παντοκράτορος*, P. Gautier, 'Le *typikon* du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator', *REB*, 32 (1974), 1-144; rebuilding of the katholikon of the Chora monastery: R.G. Ousterhout, *The architecture of the Karye Camii in Istanbul* (DOS, 25, Washington, DC, 1987), 15-32; Kosmosoteira: *Τυπικὸν ἐμοῦ τοῦ σεβαστοκράτορος*

keeping with the tone of *eusebeia* induced by the list of his donations above was Alexios's patronage of the *Orphanotropheion* of St Paul, very much his own institution, and rather more publicly consumable than a monastery.[10] He also supported other monasteries founded by loyal associates: the Theotokos Petritziotissa of Pakourianos at Bačkovo and the *xenodocheion* and monastery complex of Attaleiates at Rhaidestos.[11] All these foundations are either connected with his own family, or other members of the aristocracy, and those that are not in Constantinople are not very far from there. It is less easy to understand his patronage of far-flung monasteries with which he had no real association and of 'holy men'. It has been suggested that there was a general public scepticism at this time about just the type of holy man Alexios chose to patronise.[12] So why then did the emperor choose to associate himself with them and their establishments?

Ἰσαακίου καὶ υἱοῦ βασιλέως κυροῦ Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ ἐπὶ τῷ καινισθέντι παρ' ἡμῶν νεοσυστάτῳ μοναστηρίῳ κατὰ τὴν πεντεκαιδεκάτην ἰνδικτιῶνα τοῦ ἑξακισχιλιοστοῦ ἑξακοσιοστοῦ ἑξηκοστοῦ ἔτους, ἐν ᾧ καὶ καθίδρυται τὸ τῆς κοσμοσωτείρας μου καὶ θεομήτορος καὶ ἐν πολλοῖς εὐεργέτιδος διὰ μουσείου εἰκόνισμα, ed. L. Petit, 'Typikon de monastère de la Kosmosoteira près d'Aenos (1152)', *IRAIK*, 13 (1908), 17-77. The Kecharitomene typikon states that Eirene founded the Christ Philanthropos monastery before Kecharitomene, but elsewhere it is described as the Philanthropos 'which he (Alexios) had built.' These claims do not have to be contradictory: it must have been a joint foundation; there is plenty of evidence for Alexios and Eirene acting together in matters of public piety. 'Philanthropos' is a title which is particularly suited to the public image of Alexios. For Alexios's involvement on this institution see A.S. Mordtmann, *Esquisse topographique de Constantinople* (Lille, 1892), 52.

[10] See above, Magdalino, 156-165.

[11] *PakourianosTyp*: *Τὸ τυπικὸν τὸ ἐκτεθὲν παρὰ τοῦ μεγάλου δομεστίκου τῆς δύσεως κυροῦ Γρηγορίου τοῦ Πακουριανοῦ πρὸς τὴν παρ' αὐτοῦ κτισθεῖσαν μονὴν τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς Πετριτζιωτίσσης*, P. Gautier, 'Le *typikon* du sébaste Grégoire Pakourianos', *REB*, 42 (1984), 5-145; *AttaleiatesTyp*: *Διάταξις σὺν Θεῷ γενομένη παρὰ Μιχαὴλ πατρικίου, ἀνθυπάτου, κριτοῦ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἱπποδρόμου καὶ τοῦ βήλου, τοῦ Ἀτταλειάτου, ἐπὶ τῷ παρ' αὐτοῦ συστάντι πτωχοτροφείῳ καὶ τῷ μοναστηρίῳ, καθὼς ὀφείλει τελεῖσθαι τὰ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ἄχρις αἰῶνος εἰς δόξαν Πατρός, Υἱοῦ καὶ ἁγίου Πνεύματος*, ed. P. Gautier, 'La Diataxis de Michel Attaliate', *REB*, 39 (1981), 17-129.

[12] P. Magdalino, 'The Byzantine holy man in the twelfth century', *The Byzantine saint*, ed. S. Hackel (Studies supplementary to *Sobornost*, London, 1981), 51-66.

Christodoulos (c.1025-1093) had already had a successful monastic career both on Bithynian Mt Olympos and on Mt Latros, as well as being responsible for the foundation of another religious establishment on the island of Kos before founding the monastery on Patmos that history has inextricably linked to his name and reputation.[13] Cyril (c.1015-1110), although always exhibiting ascetic tendencies, had been married with a family and worked as a pilot on the Black Sea, before he gave them up to be an ascetic on an island in the lake of Philea.[14] Eventually he entered the monastery nearby, founded by his brother, where he became a spiritual father to the monks and to many who came to visit him for advice.[15] Meletios (b. 1025-1064, d. 1095-1124), originally from Cappadocia, started his monastic life in Constantinople before wandering through Greece and establishing his own monastic empire not many miles south of the city of Thebes.[16] Details about Esaias (late eleventh-early twelfth centuries) before the foundation of the monastery at Kykkou are scarce: he practised as a hermit in the district of Myrianthousa in the mountains in the region of Akamas in central Cyprus, and after encountering Manuel Boutoumites, the governor of the island, he travelled to Constantinople, where eventually he received the icon which was carried in state to Cyprus.[17] Bartholomew (active in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries), a native of Calabria, entered the ascetic life as a teenager, rejecting his parents and the life they had planned for him.[18] After facing and conquering ascetic trials in Calabria Ulteriore, disciples gathered around him, and the monastery of Patir (τοῦ

[13] John metropolitan of Rhodes, *Ἀκολουθία τοῦ ὁσίου καὶ θεοφόρου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Χριστοδούλου (Bios)*, ed. I. Sakkelion and K. Voines, *Ἀκολουθία ἱερὰ τοῦ ὁσίου καὶ θεοφόρου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Χριστοδούλου τοῦ Θαυματουργοῦ* (Athens, 1884), 109-133; Athanasios of Antioch, *Ἀκολουθία ἱερὰ τοῦ ὁσίου καὶ θεοφόρου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Χριστοδούλου (Enkomion)*, ed. Sakkelion and Voines, 134-162; Theodosios, *Ἀκολουθία ἱερὰ τοῦ ὁσίου καὶ θεοφόρου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Χριστοδούλου (Enkomion)*, ed. Sakkelion and Voines, 163-208.

[14] *VCyril*, ch. 3; chs. 5-6, ed. Sargologos, 48-55; 57-68.

[15] *VCyril*, chs. 21-22, ed. Sargologos, 104-109.

[16] *VMel*, ed. Vasilievskii, 1-69.

[17] Ephraim, *Perigraphe*, 25-32.

[18] *VBart*, ch. 1.4-6, *AASS* Sept. 8, 811-812.

Πατρός) in the district of the great port of Rossano came into being.[19]

The sources that deal with Christodoulos are relatively numerous. Three texts survive that are ascribed to his own authorship: his last will and testament, a codicil to that will, and a *Hypotyposis*, or framework for the organisation of the monastery on Patmos.[20] They were dictated by Christodoulos early in the 1090s on the island of Euboia. A *Life* and two *Enkomia* also exist; the *Life* was written about 50 years later, at approximately 1140, by the metropolitan of Rhodes, and one of the *Enkomia* was composed between 1143 and 1156, by the then metropolitan of Antioch.[21] There are curious discrepancies, mainly of emphasis, between the will and its codicil, and the *Hypotyposis*. The will and codicil give equal importance to Christodoulos's monastic foundations on Kos and Patmos, while the *Hypotyposis* is decidedly about Patmos.[22] Though supposedly written in exile which was already of several years' duration, in the confines of Christodoulos's latest and last foundation, it looks forward to a future on Patmos, and even to the translation of the author's remains to the island: 'The Lord has decided that after my death, Patmos will be my tomb'.[23] This is more in tune with the *Life* and the *Enkomion*, both of which see Patmos, with the aid of hindsight, as the culmination of Christodoulos's career. The evidence of the manuscript tradition also separates the *Hypotyposis* from the other two texts: the original documents containing the will and codicil survive in the library on

[19] *VBart*, ch. 2, *AASS* Sept. 8, 815-819, The exact date of foundation is unknown: its earliest manuscript is dated to 1083; although an Orthodox foundation, in 1105 Bartholomew ceded it to Roger and papal authority.

[20] *MM* VI, 59-80 (*Hypotyposis*), 81-85 (*Diatheke*), 85-90 (*Kodikellos*).

[21] E. Vranoussi, *Τὰ ἁγιολογικὰ κείμενα τοῦ ὁσίου Χριστοδούλου, ἱδρυτοῦ τῆς ἐν Πάτμου μονῆς. Φιλολογικὴ παράδοσις καὶ ἱστορικαὶ μαρτυρίαι* (Athens, 1966), 58-66.

[22] *MM* VI, 63-68; 86-88. The significance of the Kos foundation has been brought to our attention by the recent work of Anthony Kirby: A. Kirby, *The archaeology of Christodoulos: Monastic practice and monastic building in eleventh-century Byzantium* (MA thesis, Belfast, 1993), especially 74-88.

[23] *MM* VI, 63.

Patmos, while the earliest manuscript of the *Hypotyposis* is dated to the end of the twelfth century.[24]

The deeds of Cyril are recorded in his *Life*, penned by his disciple Nicholas Kataskepenos.[25] Its construction is unusual and original for a hagiography: a sequence of factual biographical information is interspersed with extensive quotations from the early church fathers, which serve to underline Cyril's consummate holiness. The language is also direct and without the florid and obscure expressions favoured by many of his contemporaries. In his role as spiritual father, the central theme of the *Life*, he comes into contact with many famous people, including Alexios. All Kataskepenos's surviving writings are religious in character, apart from a few letters, one of which was addressed to the empress Eirene.[26]

The source of primary information about Meletios is two *Lives*, composed, like the *Life* of Christodoulos, about a generation after the saint's death, one by Theodore Prodromos, the other by Nicholas, bishop of Methone.[27] They are generally considered to be independent of each other because of numerous factual differences in each, but there are indications within the texts that Prodromos not only was aware of the *Life* by Nicholas, but even makes fun of it in his own version.[28] Prodromos and Nicholas were noted figures who played prominent roles in twelfth-century Constantinople.

[24] Vranoussi, *Τὰ ἁγιολογικὰ κείμενα*, 28-30, 31-34, 14-15.

[25] *VCyril*, ed. Sargologos, 43. His epithet Kataskepenos comes from association with the monastery of Kataskepe, founded by Manuel Komnenos in 1143.

[26] For a full list of his writings see H.G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, XII.2.1, Munich, 1959), 639; the text of the letter to Eirene can be found in M. Gedeon, *Ἀρχεῖον Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Ἱστορίας*, I (Constantinople, 1911), 58.

[27] Nicholas of Methone, *Βίος τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Μελετίου τοῦ ἐν τῷ ὄρει τῆς Μυουπόλεως, ἀσκήσαντος*, ed. tr. P. Armstrong, *The Lives of Meletios of Myoupolis* (BBTT, 3, Belfast, forthcoming), ed. V. Vasilievskii, 'Βίοι Μελετίου τοῦ νέου', *PPSb*, 6.2 (1886), 1-69. Nicholas seems to have used the *Alexiad* as a source for two historical incidents which are retold in his *Vita* featuring Meletios, who does not appear in the *Alexiad;* this means the *Life* by Nicholas was written after 1148, and before 1160, when Nicholas is thought to have died.

[28] For the arguments see the introduction to Armstrong, *The Lives of Meletios of Myoupolis*.

Nicholas's preserved works are all religious in character; whether directly or indirectly, he seems to have been involved in most of the religious crises in the mid-twelfth century, which in turn influenced several of his works.[29] Prodromos's literary output was vast and varied; although he is known primarily today for his secular writings, he was the author of many more texts of a religious nature than Nicholas.[30]

All the original documentation to do with Kykkou, the tomb of Esaias, and the only copy of the monastery regulations which Esaias himself had written, were destroyed in a fire in 1365,[31] but in 1422, only fifty-seven years later, the prevailing oral tradition about the foundation of the monastery was recorded. That text was revised by Ephraim, patriarch of Jerusalem, and published in 1751. The account given by Leontios Machairas, recorded before 1487, although much briefer than Ephraim's, has more factual information, and differs on a few minor points. But in general it concurs with the 'official' monastery version.[32]

An anonymous *Life* of Bartholomew, written by someone, presumably a monk who knew him personally, survives.[33] The 1762 text in the *Acta Sanctorum* was taken from a manuscript, date unstated, preserved in the monastery of St Salvator at Messina, the other foundation attributed to Bartholomew. Its direct lineage would suggest that it is a reliable source.

The only direct encounter between Alexios and Christodoulos, according to the *Life*, took place in Constantinople, during an official audience, when the emperor responded to the holy man's request for a small island where he could live a truly ascetic life,

[29] His writings are all listed in A. Angelou, *Nikolaos of Methone, Ἀνάπτυξις τῆς Θεολογικῆς Στοιχειώσεως Πρόκλου Πλατωνικοῦ Φιλοσόφου* (Leiden, 1984), xxv-xxxiv.

[30] Those works definitely attributed to him are listed in W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte* (WByzSt, 11, Vienna, 1974), 37-67.

[31] Ephraim, *Perigraphe*, 37-38: καὶ τὸ κάλλος δὲ τῆς Μονῆς καὶ ὁ Ναὸς, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ σκέυη, Βιβλία, ἱερὰ Ἄμφια, Διαθῆκαι, Χρυσόβουλλα, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα were destroyed.

[32] Machairas, ed. Dawkins, II, 36-39. 1487 is the date of the latest recorded event in the narration.

[33] AASS, Sept VIII, 810-826, with A. Mancini, *Rendiconti dell'Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere e Belle Arte di Napoli*, n.s. 21 (1907), 491-504.

with an imperial request to go instead to sort out the troubled monks of Kellia. Christodoulos proposed a new set of regulations which would restore order there, and in return the emperor granted him his island.[34] Official documents record numerous privileges granted to Christodoulos by Alexios in 1087 and 1088, concerning the islands of Leipsos, Leros and Patmos.[35] Around 1091 Alexios and his family make a kind of pilgrimage to Cyril and are received in his cell.[36] Around 1105 Alexios alone visits him again.[37] Then in 1107-8 Cyril prophesies to Nicholas Kataskepenos that Alexios will be victorious in the war with Bohemond.[38] There is no evidence that Alexios and Meletios ever met, yet it is the Alexios connection which provides the only fixed chronological point in either *Life*. According to Nicholas, on an occasion while Meletios was counselling one of his monks, the saint went into a trance and appeared to address a vision of the emperor.[39] Afterwards he told the monk that he had advised Alexios not to go into battle against the Cumans at Anchialos on the following day, an event independently dated to 1095.[40] Prodromos is the source for Alexios's financial donation to Meletios; no official documents survive to support this.[41] The two accounts dealing with the foundation of Kykkou and acquisition of the famous icon differ over whether Esaias ever met Alexios face to face. According to Machairas, on Manuel Boutoumites's recommendation Alexios sent a ship to Cyprus to fetch Esaias. When the emperor's daughter was cured, Alexios asked Esaias what he could give him, and though reluctant, handed over the famous icon.[42] According to

[34] *VChristo*, chs. 11-13, ed. Sakkelion, 123.
[35] *MM* VI, 25-29, 34-59.
[36] *VCyril*, ch. 47, ed. Sargologos, 225-235; for the date, 39.
[37] *VCyril*, ch. 51, ed. Sargologos, 243-244.
[38] *VCyril*, ch. 36, ed. Sargologos, 154.
[39] Nicholas, *VMel*, ed. Armstrong, ch. 26, ed Vasilievskii, 26.7.
[40] The scene which Nicholas relates seems to correspond to Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, X.ii.2-3, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols. (Paris, 1937-45), II, 190-192, tr. E.R.A. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1988), 297-298, where there is no mention of Meletios.
[41] Prodromos, *VMel*, ed. Armstrong, ch. 15, ed. Vasilievskii, 49.20.
[42] Machairas, ed. Dawkins, II, 36-39.

Ephraim, Esaias went to Constantinople with Manuel Boutoumites and seems to skulk in the background while Manuel attempted to get the icon from Alexios.[43] But both sources agree that it is the miraculous cure of the emperor's daughter which brings about the donation, without meeting Alexios. Perhaps by the time these particular events were recorded the kudos of personal contact with Alexios had lost its meaning. Like Christodoulos, Bartholomew was given a royal audience in Constantinople. We know only that he was received by Alexios and Eirene, not why, nor the subject of their conversation.[44]

Even if their interaction with Alexios is tenuous, each of these holy men and holy places already had their own network of aristocratic connections. Constantine Choirosphaktes visited both Cyril and Meletios, as well as being mentioned in two chrysobulls of Alexios of April and May 1088 concerning Patmos.[45] Some of his family papers are preserved in the monastery on Patmos.[46] The Choirosphaktes were a well-known Peloponnesian family, one of whom had a *contretemps* with Nikon Metanoietes.[47] In the *Life* of Meletios, Constantine Choirosphaktes was the governor (*praitor*) of Hellas and Peloponnese, and evidently interested in religious matters, for in 1082 he took part in the synod to examine the doc-

[43] Ephraim, *Perigraphe*, 26-30.
[44] *VBart*, ch. 28, *AASS* Sept. VIII, 821: καὶ Ἀλεξίῳ καὶ Εἰρήνῃ τοῖς φιλοχρίστοις ἐντυχὼν βασιλεῦσιν (οὗτοι γὰρ τῷ τότε τας οἴακας τῶν ῥωμαίων βασιλείας ὀρθοδοξοτατα ἴθυνον), λαμπρᾶς δεξιώσεως παρ' αὐτῶν τε καὶ τὰς συγκλήτου πάσης τυγχάνει, πολλοῖς τε παρὰ πάντων καὶ πλουσίοις τοῖς χαρίσμασι δεξιοῦται, ἔν τε σεβασμίαις εἰκόσι καὶ βίβλοις καὶ σκεύεσιν ἱεροῖς, τὴν οἰκείαν ἀρετὴν ἔχων προοδοιποιοῦσαν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰς ἐκείνων πείθουσαν πρὸς τοῦτο ψυχάς.
[45] *VCyril*, ch. 34, ed. Sargologos, 143-146; Nicholas, *VMel*, ed. Vasilievskii, 34.11-35.14, ed. Armstrong, ch. 36; Patmos: *MM* VI, 45, 53.
[46] ed. G. Kolias, 'Léon Choerosphactès, magistre, proconsul et patrice', *BNJ*, 31 (1939), 16-17.
[47] For a bibliographical account of the family see A. Mordtmann, 'Plombs byzantins de la Grèce et du Péloponnèse', *RevArch* (1877) pt. 2, 48.18. Nikon brought about the death of Michael Choirosphaktes who had assaulted one of the monks in a metochion of his monastery: *The Life of St Nikon*, chs. 60-61, ed. tr. D.F. Sullivan (Brookline, 1987), 194-206.

trines of John Italos.[48] When he visited Cyril he unsuccessfully offered the saint some land.[49] In keeping with Choirosphaktes's role in the trial of Italos, Cyril offers him some advice on the superfluity of philosophical learning, while similar sentiments, in less specific terms, are expressed by Meletios to the sick friend brought by Choirosphaktes to be cured by the saint. As an associate of three noted religious figures and monastic founders of the day, combined with his part in Italos's trial, Choirosphaktes is shown to be a bastion of orthodoxy. John Doukas, brother of the empress Eirene, visited Meletios in 1092 to ask his blessings before beginning a campaign to recapture Crete.[50] When John was stationed with the fleet at Euripos, Meletios advised him to delay setting sail for Crete to do battle with the rebel Karikes.[51] John Doukas corresponded with Theophylact, archbishop of Bulgaria.[52] The empress's other brother, Michael Doukas, visited Cyril, as well as taking part in the synod of Blachernai, which condemned Leo of Chalcedon, and is commemorated in the Kecharitomene and Pantokrator *typika*.[53] Alexios's own mother, Anna Dalassene, was a patron of both Christodoulos and Cyril, as well as of the monk Ioannikios, to whom she entrusted Alexios's safety at the river

[48] He was governor under both Nikephoros Botaneiates and Alexios: Mordtmann, *RevArch* (1877), pt. 2, 48, seal no. 18. For his role in the trial of John Italos see: *Τὰ πραχθέντα βασιλικῇ καὶ συνοδικῇ διαγνώσει ἔν τε τῷ παλατίῳ καὶ τῇ ἁγιωτάτῃ τοῦ θεοῦ μεγάλῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ κατὰ τοῦ Ἰτάλου Ἰωάννου· ἡ βασιλικὴ σημείωσις*, ed. J. Gouillard, 'Le procès officiel de Jean l'Italien. Les actes et leurs sous-entendus', *TM*, 9 (1985), 145.159-160 (f. 713v).

[49] *VCyril*, ch. 34.1, ed. Sargologos, 143-144.

[50] Nicholas, *VMel*, ed. Armstrong, ch 27, ed. Vasilievskii, 27.21-28.10.

[51] Karikes had succeeded Nikephoros Diogenes as *doux* of Crete: there are differing accounts of his rebellion: *Al*, IX.ii.1, L II, 162; S, 272-273; John Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν*, XVIII.22.16, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst (CSHB, Bonn, 1897), 737; Michael Glykas *Βίβλος χρονική*, IV, ed. I. Bekker (CSHB, Bonn, 1836), 620.8. Euripos can stand for the whole island of Euboia, or the port at modern Chalkis.

[52] Theophylact, epp. 8, 17, ed. P. Gautier, *Théophylacte d'Achrida, II, Lettres* (CFHB, 16/2, Thessalonike, 1986), 155; 189.

[53] *VCyril*, ch. 46, ed. Sargologos, 211-225; *KecharitomeneTyp*, ch. 71, lines 1859-1861, ed. Gautier, 125; *PantokratorTyp*, line 233, ed. Gautier, 43.

Galikos in 1078.[54] Cyril prophesied to her that she and her family would one day regain the imperial throne.[55] She tried to give money to Cyril, who refused it: φιλομόναχος δὲ οὖσα ἡ γυνὴ δέδωκεν αὐτῷ καὶ χρήματά τινα ἃ καὶ μὴ βουλόμενον δέξασθαι, δι' ὅρκων αὐτὸν εὐπειθῆ πεποίηκε.[56] A patron of several holy men, Christodoulos seems to have been her favourite, for she confirmed the donation of the monastery of Pantepoptes to him in 1087, the same monastery to which she retired some time after 1095, and where she died 1100/1102.[57] The relationship of George Palaiologos with two holy men, Cyril and Leo of Chalcedon, is complicated. According to Anna, George's safe delivery after the battle of Dristra in 1087 could be attributed to a vision of Leo, which guided him back to Constantinople.[58] However George was one of the participants in 1095 who at the synod of Blachernai voted against Leo.[59] But his true piety is revealed in the *Life* of Cyril, when he travels to Philea, 1110, to consult the saint and gives him money.[60] Meletios was visited by otherwise unattested members of the Kastamonites, Batatzes and Bryennios families.[61] He also

[54] *MM* VI, 32-33; *VCyril*, ch. 17, ed. Sargologos, 90-94, *Al*, I.vii.5, L I,, 30-31, S, 48; *Al.*, I.viii.2, L I, 32, S, 182; *Al.*, I.ix.3, L, I, 35, S, 51; Nikephoros Bryennios, Ὕλη ἱστορίας, IV. 21, ed. P. Gautier, *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (CFHB, 9, Brussels, 1975), 288.

[55] *VCyril*, ch. 17.1, ed. Sargologos, 90-91.

[56] *VCyril*, ch. 17.5, ed. Sargologos, 94.

[57] *MM* VI, 32-33.

[58] *Al.*, VII.iv.1-4, L II, 101.23-103.11, S, 227.

[59] Τὸ σημείωμα τὸ γεγονὸς ἐπὶ τῇ προβάσῃ ἐνώσει τῆς συνόδου καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἀπὸ Χαλκηδόνος Λέοντος καὶ εὐσεβεῖ ἀποφάσει περὶ τῆς προσκυνήσεως τῶν ἁγίων εἰκόνων παρὰ τοῦ κρατίστου καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν βασιλέως κυροῦ Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ, τοῦ καὶ ἐπ' εὐσεβείᾳ Θεοῦ χάριτι διαλάμψαντος, *PG* 127, 972C; Gautier, 'Le synode des Blachernes', *REB*, 29 (1971), 215-216.

[60] *VCyril*, ch. 48.3, ed. Sargologos, 237.

[61] Nicholas, *VMel*, ed. Armstrong, chs. 28-29, ed. Vasilievskii, 28.10-30.3. For the families see D.I. Polemis, *The Doukai: a contribution to Byzantine prosopography* (University of London Historical Studies, 22, London, 1968), 86; 112-113; A.K. Amantos, 'Η οἰκογένεια Βατάτζη', *EEBS*, 21 (1951), 174-178. The centre of operations of the Bryennios and Batatzes families seems to have been in Thrace: M. Angold, 'Archons and dynasts: local aristocracies and the cities of the later Byzantine empire', *The Byzantine aristocracy, IX-XIII centuries*, ed. M.J. Angold (BAR Int. Ser., 221, Oxford, 1984), 242-243.

prophesied correctly to the governor, Hikanatos Bardas, that he would be reappointed for a third time to that office, and to a Ioannes Xeros that he would shortly die.[62] Other aristocratic connections of Meletios were treated with a certain amount of contempt: Epiphanos Kamateros, the governor 'was greedy for whole dishes', while the story concerning the famous military man Leo Nikerites, 'that general among castrates, and castrate among generals', is less than flattering.[63] The strange conversion of Manuel Boutoumites from contempt to admiration of Esaias led him initially into donating two icons specially commissioned in the capital together with sufficient funds to build a church; subsequently he transferred three villages to Kykkou after its foundation. Bartholomew accepted the patronage of the admiral Christodoulos, who held office at the Norman court of Palermo: θερμότατος συνεργὸς ἀνὴρ παρὰ μὲν τοῖς ἐπιγείοις βασιλεῦσι μεγάλα τοι τηνικαῦτα δυνάμενος.[64] When visiting Constantinople, he received gifts from Basil Kalemeres, and an unnamed *patrikios* donated the monastery of Hagios Basileios on Athos to him.[65]

Although this chapter began with examples of the patronage of Alexios to charismatic monastic founders, closer examination of the sources for this patronage, and of the other patrons, shows Alexios's involvement to have been rather less than that of those around him. He is always cited as the patron of Patmos and Christodoulos, but the real patron was Anna Dalassene; Alexios simply followed her line, while Patmos did not become important until after Alexios's death. Alexios may have travelled twice into Thrace to visit Cyril, but again it was at the instigation of Anna

[62] Prodromos, *VMel*, ed. Armstrong, chs. 29-30, ed. Vasilievskii, 59.18-60.7.

[63] Prodromos, *VMel*, ed. Armstrong, chs. 23 and 31, ed. Vasilievskii, 53.10-54.5 and 60.8-62.7. The Kamateros family had property in Central Greece: J. Darrouzès, *Georges et Dèmètrios Tornikès, lettres et discours* (Le monde byzantin, Paris, 1979), 48-49. Nikerites's brief appearances in the *Alexiad*, VII.ii.9: VIII.ix.7; XIII.v.1, show him to have been militarily reliable and trustworthy, and accordingly he held high office. The character portrayed in the *Life* of Meletios does not tally with this.

[64] *VBart*, ch. 2.19, AASS Sept. VIII, 817.

[65] *VBart*, ch. 3.29, AASS Sept. VIII, 821. This Athos monastery is not otherwise known.

Dalassene, who had been the patron of Cyril for at least twenty years before Alexios visited him. Even Alexios's spiritual fathers were protegés of his mother. The piety of Anna Dalassene is emphasised by Anna throughout the *Alexiad*, where she states that her grandmother 'turned the palace into a monastery', and that she was interested in priests and monks.[66] Meletios, a figure who emerges from the attention of two independent *Lives* as distant and characterless, had no direct contact with either Anna or Alexios, but had an impressive array of aristocratic patrons, not one of whom is common to both *Lives*.[67] The few facts known about Esaias indicate only Constantinopolitan connections. Bartholomew had a local circle of patronage, as well as a Constantinopolitan one. These holy men and their monasteries thrived because of the patronage of Alexios. Public acts for public consumption, they reveal a pious Alexios, supportive of the institution of monasticism, and respectful of the sanctity of genuinely holy men, while the wide geographical area covered brought maximum recognition for what was really a moderate outlay. They helped to redress the balance of opinion after his 'rape of the city' and much-criticised confiscation of church valuables: desperate situations necessitate desperate actions, but in the calm that follows one can act as one should. In turn he prospered through association with them. He could go forth (and Alexios had to go forth, in a way which had not been necessary since Basil II), armed with their prophecies and prayers. The inevitable conclusion is that he was not especially interested in either holy men or monasteries: political, not religious, considerations governed his dealings with them.

[66] *Al.*, III.viii.2-3, L, I, 125.30-126.5, S, 121.

[67] Those identified by Nicholas were either immediate members of the imperial family (John Doukas) or part of the Constantinopolitan/Thracian aristocracy (Bryennios, Kastamonites, Batatzes, Constantine Choirosphaktes) while those identified by Prodromos were from the provincial aristocracy (Bardas, Xeros) and objects of ridicule (Kamateros, Nikerites).

12

Alexios I and the heretics: the account of Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*

Dion Smythe

Introduction

Opening his book on the eleventh- and twelfth-century surge of heresy in the medieval west, and the formation of the persecuting society to counter it, R. I. Moore offers the following anecdote:

> Some years ago I asked in an examination paper for school-leavers, Why were heretics persecuted in the thirteenth century?' The question was very popular and the answer, with great confidence and near unanimity, 'because there were so many of them'.[1]

With a similar certainty to the school-leavers he criticizes, he goes on to assert:

> Religious persecution had, of course, been familiar in the Roman Empire, and remained so in the Byzantine world throughout its history.[2]

However, we are fortunate in having a corrective to this view from Robert Browning:

> Leaving aside popular heresies like Bogomilism, I have counted about twenty-five trials for 'intellectual' heresy in the age of the Comneni. And who knows how many more do not appear in our patchy records. This series of trials was something new.

[1] R. I. Moore, *The formation of a persecuting society: power and deviance in western Europe 950-1250* (Oxford, 1987), 1.
[2] Moore, *Persecuting society*, 4.

> Men noted that between the Age of Photius in the ninth century and that of Alexius Comnenus in the eleventh and twelfth centuries there had been scarcely any trials for heresy.[3]

From this it would seem that the same historical problem exists in both of the medieval European worlds: why are there so many heretics in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries? This major question for Byzantium in effect subsumes several others: was orthodoxy under threat in the reign of Alexios I Komnenos, and if it was, what was the threat? Was Alexios I Komnenos vitally concerned with matters of heresy, or was it a stance composed by Anna Komnene in the *Alexiad* to portray him as a champion of orthodoxy? Were accusations of heresy a means of dealing with opposition to the Komnenian regime, without necessarily any basis in religious belief or practice?

This talk of heresy requires some clarification. Treatments of medieval heresy are usually expositions of what the heretics are thought to have believed[4] or attempts to explain the origins of the heresy.[5] However, heresy has no objective reality; it is a social construct.[6] As such, it is imperative to understand heresy and the ascription of heretical social roles as the result of interaction between people. It may be that books are burnt and teachings anathematized, but the real phenomenon taking place is the creation and ascription of subordinate social roles and statuses by the dominant elite of a society to those individuals they wish to mar-

[3] R. Browning, 'Enlightenment and repression in Byzantium in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *P&P*, 69 (1975), 19.
[4] R.M.T. Hill, 'Pure air and portentous heresy', *SChH*, 13 (1976), 135-40; E.L. Ladurie, *Montaillou: Cathars and catholics in a French village 1294-1324* (Harmondsworth, 1980); M.D. Lambert, *Medieval heresy: popular movements from Bogomil to Hus* (London, 1977); W.L. Wakefield and A.P. Evans, *Heresies of the high middle ages* (New York and London, 1969).
[5] G. Leff, *Heresy in the later middle ages: the relation of heterodoxy to dissent, c.1250-1450* (New York, 1967); R.I. Moore, *The birth of popular heresy* (London, 1975); R.I. Moore, *The origin of European dissent* (London, 1977); J.B. Russell, *Dissent and reform in the early middle ages* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1965).
[6] Ladurie, *Montaillou*; L.N. McCrillis, *The demonization of minority groups in Christian society during the central middle ages* (Ann Arbor, 1974).

ginalise and/or control.[7] In stressing the origin of heresy in the social interaction between individuals and groups of individuals who have differentiated access to social power, I do not deal with what Byzantine heretics are supposed to have believed, nor with the origins of those beliefs;[8] rather I examine how Anna Komnene defines and portrays certain individuals as heretics.[9] The portrayal of heretics in the *Alexiad* is twofold: first there is the detailed description of those individuals whom Anna Komnene portrays as heretics; second, there are more generalised references to heretical groups, including other religions[10] (Islam), or other Churches

[7] N. Abercrombie, S. Hill and B.S. Turner, *The dominant ideology thesis* (London, 1980); F. Barth, *Ethnic groups and boundaries: the social organization of culture difference* (Boston, 1969); P.L. Berger, *The social reality of religion* (London, 1969); A.P. Cohen, *The symbolic construction of community* (London and New York, 1985); Mary Douglas, *Purity and danger: An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo* (London, 1966); K.T. Erikson, *Wayward puritans: A study in the sociology of deviance* (New York, 1966); Jack P. Gibbs, *Norms, deviance and social control: conceptual matters* (New York and Oxford, 1981); Martin N. Marger, *Elites and masses: an introduction to political sociology* (New York, 1981).

[8] For such discussions, see C. Astruc and others, 'Les sources grecques pour l'histoire des pauliciens d'Asie Mineure', *TM*, 4 (1970), 1-227; N.G. Garsoian, 'Byzantine heresy, a reinterpretation', *DOP*, 25 (1971), 87-113; and *The Paulician heresy* (The Hague, 1967); J.M. George, *The dualistic-gnostic tradition in the Byzantine commonwealth with special reference to the Paulician and Bogomil movements* (Ann Arbor, 1979); J. Gouillard, "L'hérésie dans l'empire byzantin des origines au XIIe siècle", *TM*, 1 (1965), 299-324; D. Gress-Wright, 'Bogomilism in Constantinople', *B*, 47 (1977), 163-85; P. Lemerle, 'L'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineur d'après les sources grecques', *TM*, 5 (1973), 1-144; M. Loos, 'Certains aspects du bogomilisme byzantin des XIe et XIIe siècles', *BS*, 28 (1967), 39-53; M. Loos, *Dualist heresy in the middle ages* (Prague, 1974); D. Obolensky, *The Bogomils: A study in Balkan neo-manichaeism* (Cambridge, 1948); V. Paraskevopoulou, *Some aspects of the phenomenon of heresy in the Byzantine empire and in the west during the 11th and 12th centuries* (Ann Arbor, 1976); S. Runciman, *The mediaeval manichee: A study of the Christian dualist heresy* (Cambridge, 1947).

[9] The relationship between 'heretics' and their definers (in the Byzantine context) was explored in P.J. Alexander, 'Religious persecution and resistance in the Byzantine empire of the eighth and ninth centuries: methods and justifications', *Speculum*, 52 (1977), 238-264.

[10] Interestingly, Anna Komnene barely mentions Jews in the *Alexiad*. There is only one direct reference to the contemporary 'Hebrews' (*Al.*, XI.vi.9, L, III, 32.11, S, 352), referring to the fall of Jerusalem to the First Crusade, which resulted in the death of many Saracens and Hebrews. Nearer home, Anna Komnene records that in payment for the Venetian aid, the Doge, the patriarch of Venice and the Church of St Mark's received annual payments from Alexios I Komnenos. As well as freedom from all Roman exactions and the rents of the Amalfitans who had shops in Constantinople, the Venetians also received the warehouses from the ancient quay of the Hebrews (*Al.*, VI.v.10, L, II, 54.23, S, 191) to the Vigla. The Hebrews are now distant in time rather than in space. The final mention of a cognate is the city named Hebraike (*Al.*, XI.iii.5, L, II,18.25-6, S, 342), which has been identified, S, 342, n.10; R. Grousset, *Histoire des Croisades* (Paris, 1936), I, 37, n.3, as Heraclea. Anna Komnene does not comment on this name. The single reference to 'Jews' is again historical and foreign as Anna Komnene likens Samuel, last of the Bulgarian dynasty, to Zedekiah, last of the Jews (*Al.*, VII.iii.4, L, II, 96.9-10, S, 223, n.10), in a digression on the origin of the name Great Peristhlava. Anna Komnene marginalizes the Jews of the Byzantine Empire by omitting them from her account. Given that other sources indicate that the eleventh and twelfth centuries were a period of Jewish immigration into the Empire from the Islamic Levant, her reticence may be due to a feeling that Judaism as a Byzantine heresy should not be seen to be flourishing under Alexios I Komnenos, Anna's suppressor of heresies.

(Latin Christianity), as well as heresy (Paulicianism or Bogomilism) per se. The wider questions raised of Anna Komnene's treatment of foreign groupings as foreign as well as 'heretical', has made me restrict my discussion in this paper to the individual heretics.

Basil the Bogomil

The place to begin is Anna's description of her father's confrontation with Basil the Bogomil.[11] Book XV is the climax of the work, where Anna Komnene draws together all the themes she has been developing. Alexios is shown to be a great hero and the saviour of the empire; his *andreia* on the battlefield is shown by his defeat of the Turks, which also places him in the context of defending the Christian oecumene; his *philanthropia* is shown by the foundation of the *Orphanotropheion*; his defeat of heretics shows Alexios to be 'faithful in Christ', and by extension to be guarded by God. Having reiterated his credentials established in earlier books of the

[11] *Al.*, XV.viii.1-x.5, L, III, 218-229, S, 496-505.

Alexiad, Anna Komnene is able to allow the final catastrophe to play itself out, whereby Alexios dies and the succession passes to John II Komnenos.[12] Anna leads her reader to conclude that the confrontation with Basil the Bogomil took place just before Alexios's death in 1118, rather than sometime in the period 1097-1100, its most likely date. The heresy is introduced as a major set piece. Rather than a growing awareness, it springs full grown upon an unsuspecting world:

> a great cloud of heretics arose; and the appearance of this heresy was new, never previously known to the church.[13]

It was not a theological error pronounced from the pulpit or to students, by a teacher led astray by demons. It was a race, a well established sect, which was only now emerging from secrecy.[14] Anna describes this dwelling in secrecy as one of the major Bogomil characteristics.[15] Interestingly, given Beck's *dicta* concerning hairlength as a signifier of religious non-conformity,[16] in describing the Bogomils Anna begins with the fact that no worldly hairstyles are to be found among the Bogomils.[17]

> The Bogomils concealed the evil under cloak and cowl. With sombre demeanour and hidden faces, they walk with their heads down, muttering, but inside they are like a ravening wolf.[18]

As with all the enemies of Alexios, Anna is careful to portray the Bogomils as opponents worthy of Alexios's skill. They were a race

[12] A lacuna hides the date of the Basil the Bogomil episode in *Al.*, XV.viii.1, L, III, 218.28-29, S, 496.
[13] *Al.*, XV.viii.1, L, III, 218.29-31, S, 496.
[14] *Al.*, XV.viii.1, L, III, 219.5-7, S, 496.
[15] *Al.*, XV.viii.1, L, III, 219.6-7, S, 496.
[16] H.-G. Beck, 'Formes de non-conformisme à Byzance', *Académie royale de Belgique. Bulletin de la classe des lettres et de la sciences morales et politiques*, ser. 5 65.6-9 (1979), 315-328.
[17] *Al.*, XV.viii.1, L, III, 219.7-8., S, 496.
[18] *Al.*, XV.viii.1, L, III, 219.8-11, S,496.

of the shadows[19] hiding like snakes in a hole, which Alexios brought out into the light, by incantations.[20] With the Bogomils now established as worthy opponents, Anna places them into the context of Alexios's career as she has presented it: having dealt with enemies east and west, he turns to spiritual opponents.[21] Alexios excelled everyone at everything:

> he was better at teaching than teachers, just as he surpassed the generals most noted for their conduct of arms.[22]

The Bogomils were endemic.[23] Basil the Bogomil, described as monk,[24] was the cause. The extent of the heresy and the large number of souls who were lost to it forced Alexios's hand.[25] The significant feature of Basil the Bogomil's efforts seems to have been that they took place within the capital itself. To be a heretic in the sticks was one thing, but to have heretics in Constantinople was something entirely different.[26] It would seem that for all their concealment, their wearing of cowls and cloaks, the Bogomils were easily identified, as Alexios initiated his investigation by having some of the Bogomils brought to the palace.[27] When questioned in the imperial palace, the suspects were only too willing to denounce Basil the Bogomil as the leader.[28]

[19] *Al.*, XV. viii.2, L, III, 219.12, S, 496.
[20] *Al.*, XV.viii.2, L, III, 219.13, S, 496, which is an interesting—if metaphorical—positive use of 'magical' practices in the *Alexiad*.
[21] *Al.*, XV.viii.2, L, III, 219.14-16, S, 496-497.
[22] *Al.*, XV.viii.2, L, III, 219.16-19, S, 497.
[23] *Al.*, XV.viii.3, L, III, 219.19-20, S, 497.
[24] *Al.*, XV.viii.3, L, III, 219.20-21, S, 497.
[25] *Al.*, XV.viii.3, L, III, 219.24-27, S, 497.
[26] P. Magdalino, 'Constantinople and the ἔξω χώραι in the time of Balsamon', *Byzantium in the twelfth century: canon law, state and society*, ed. N. Oikonomides (Athens, 1991), 179-198.
[27] *Al.*, XV.viii.3, L, III, 219.27-8, S, 497.
[28] *Al.*, XV.viii.3, L, III, 219.28-30, S, 497.

Basil, named as the archisatrap[29] of Satanael, is brought to the light. He is described as being dressed in a monk's habit, with a pinched face, a sparse beard, and being quite tall.[30] The habit shows the ease with which the Bogomil hid his true nature, whilst the mention of the beard brings us back once more to Beck's considerations of non-conformity. His height is mentioned in order to raise his stature with regard to Alexios as an opponent. The first interaction between Alexios and Basil the Bogomil was not as violent as might have been expected. The emperor, hoping to gain more information from Basil by subterfuge than by torture, invited the heresiarch to the palace, on the pretext that he wished to learn more about Basil's teachings. Part of this pretence was that the emperor rose from his throne when Basil entered, and Basil was urged to sit in the imperial presence.[31] He is again described as a monk, even though one whose evil had many shapes.[32] The trap is laid out for our inspection. Alexios pretended that he wished to become Basil's disciple, in order to save his immortal soul. Alexios treated Basil's words as if they were a divinely inspired oracle. Anna Komnene relates that Alexios's brother, the *sebastokrator* Isaac, was also party to the deception, and indeed the oblique phraseology suggests that the idea of deception may originally have been Isaac's.[33] Though cautious at first, Basil eventually gave way to the temptation of having the emperor as a convert, and revealed the Bogomil doctrine.[34] A stenographer concealed behind a curtain in the women's quarters took down verbatim Basil's teachings.[35]

[29] *Al.*, XV.viii.3, L, III, 220.4, S, 497. The term is used more normally (nine out of ten) by Anna Komnene to refer to a Turkish commander. P. Gautier, *Al.*, IV *Index* (Paris, 1976), 12-13.

[30] *Al.*, XV.viii.3, L, III, 220.5-6, S, 497.

[31] *Al.*, XV.viii.4, L, III, 220.9-11, S, 497. Note the outrage this caused when the western knight tried to do the same thing in Alexios's presence, *Al.*, X.x.6, L, II, 229.8-17, S, 325.

[32] *Al.*, XV.viii.4, L, III, 220.14-5, S, 497.

[33] *Al.*, XV.viii.4, L, III, 220.15-20, S, 497.

[34] *Al.*, XV.viii.4-5, L, III, 220-1.26-3, S, 497-498.

[35] *Al.*, XV.viii.5, L, III, 221.3-7, S, 498. It is of note that the secretary is placed behind a curtain in the women's quarters. If the women's quarters are to be conceived of as a kind of harem or purdah, then the explanation is that the

In her precis of the Bogomil doctrine as recorded from Basil's words, Anna Komnene says that he misconstrued orthodox theology, denounced the ecclesiastical organization, and held the churches to be the abodes of devils. The final indignity was that he held the sacrifice of the Liturgy to be meaningless.[36]

With hard evidence in his hand, Alexios then summoned a council, composed of the senate, the army, and the synod, under the presidency of the patriarch Nicholas Grammatikos.[37] Basil's teachings were read out to this gathering. With such direct proof, no other evidence was required, and indeed Basil the Bogomil made no attempt to recant or to distance himself from the beliefs described as heretical, but said that he was ready to face fire and scourging, to die a thousand deaths for his faith.[38] Whilst Basil the Bogomil may be presented in such a way as to emphasize the stiff-necked quality of the heretic, the possibility must be borne in mind that Anna Komnene is recording the true attitude of Basil. The prime motivation of heresy is belief in another, better world; for heretics as well as for Christians, suffering in the vale of shadows is often the means whereby the elect gain the kingdom of God.[39] Basil was imprisoned, but Alexios sent for him many times, trying to shake his obdurate error, but to no avail.[40] Anna Komnene shows us the teacher of truth, Alexios,[41] trying to make Basil the Bogomil, who had thought he was being called upon to be the teacher of the emperor,[42] see the error of his ways.

grammateus was a eunuch. The *dénouement* of the play, when Alexios throws back the curtain (XV.viii.6, L, III, 221.17-8, S, 498), indicates that the division between the male and female quarters of the palace at this point seems to have been more a corridor, with a draught-excluder curtain, than a grille as one would see in a synagogue for example.

[36] *Al.*, XV.viii.5, L, III, 221.10-16, S, 498.

[37] *Al.*, XV.viii.6, L, III, 221.18-22, S, 498.

[38] *Al.*, XV.viii.6, L, III, 221.24-27, S, 498.

[39] For another interpretation of Basil the Bogomil's steadfastness in the face of torture, see D.F.J. Leeson, *Imperial orthodoxy: heresy and politics during the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118)* (MA thesis, Queen's University of Belfast, 1987), 127-128.

[40] *Al.*, XV.viii.6, L, III, 222.6-9, S, 499.

[41] *Al.*, XV.viii.2, L, III, 219.16-19, S, 497.

[42] *Al.*, XV. viii.5, L, III, 221.7-10, S, 498.

With the leader under close house arrest, Alexios then moved against the second echelon of the sect's leadership. The emperor had a search made everywhere for the disciples and co-mystics of Basil.[43] When they were gathered together, they were examined as to their beliefs, and were found to be true disciples of Basil.[44] Anna states that the evil was deep-seated, and that many of the great houses and much of the crowd were influenced by the terrible thing.[45]

It would seem that the reason for this most serious response to the Bogomils by Alexios I Komnenos was because they were active in the capital, and were affecting the ruling élite, rather than being confined to peasants in the mountains of the Balkans. It was this threat to the City itself that prompted drastic measures according to Anna; all tainted with the stain of heresy were to be disposed of.[46] When those accused of being Bogomils were gathered together, there was the usual problem associated with witch-hunts. Some of the accused admitted that they were Bogomils, what the authorities chose to term heretics. However, many others denounced the accusation, rejecting the Bogomil heresy, and claiming to be good Christians. Anna Komnene tells us that Alexios was not inclined to believe these protestations of innocence. To prevent the eventuality that a Christian would be confused with the Bogomils as a Bogomil, or indeed that a Bogomil be thought to be a Christian and so escape punishment, Alexios evolved a novel plan by which real Christians would be easily recognized.[47]

The next day Alexios put his plan into effect. He presided over a specially constituted synod, composed of invited members of the holy synod,[48] the senate and certain monks,[49] persons known for

[43] *Al.*, XV.ix.2, L, III, 224.3-4, S, 500.
[44] *Al.*, XV.ix.2, L, III, 224.3-6, S, 500.
[45] *Al.*, XV.ix.2, L, III, 224.6-8, S, 500.
[46] *Al.*, XV.ix.2, L, III, 224.8-9, S, 501.
[47] *Al.*, XV.ix.2, L, III ,224.13-18, S, 501.
[48] And thus presumably composed of those more amenable to influence by the emperor.
[49] XV.ix.3, L, III, 224.20, S, 501. See note in L, III, 264 with cross reference to G. Buckler, *Anna Comnena, a Study* (London, 1929), 297 n. 9.

their learning.[50] Those arraigned for heresy were to stand trial before this body. The accusations were made against them once more, and the emperor instructed that each case be examined individually. Again some confessed their Bogomil belief, and refused to deny it; others denied that they were heretics and claimed to be Christians.[51] Alexios then revealed his plan to separate the sheep from the goats: all the accused were to be burnt, the heretics on a bare pyre, the Christians on a pyre surmounted by a cross. As 'consolation' Alexios says:

> Better these Christians should die than live hunted as Bogomils and an injury to public conscience.[52]

With this declaration to the Bogomils,[53] Alexios appeared to have closed the matter. The accused were led away, and the pyres were lit in the Tzykanisterion, the palace polo ground[54] The choice was given to each of the condemned to go to whichever pyre they wanted, as all were going to be burnt.[55] Seeing that the deed was inescapable, the Christians chose the pyre with the cross, whilst the Bogomils chose the one without.[56] As all the accused were to be thrown on the fires, the bystanders mourned the innocent Christians about to be martyred, and denounced the emperor.[57] At the last moment, a command came from the emperor, showing it was

[50] *Al.*, XV.ix.3, L, III, 224.18-21, S, 501.
[51] *Al.*, XV.ix.3, L, III, 224.21-27, S, 501.
[52] *Al.*, XV.ix.3, L, III, 225.4-6, S, 501.
[53] *Al.*, XV.ix.4, L, III, 225.8, S, 501; the Christians wrongly accused seem to have been forgotten.
[54] This area is liminal. It is part of the Great Palace complex, and so it is part of the 'imperial' as opposed to 'ecclesiastical' space (though this is a rather artificial distinction for Byzantium); however, it was also part of the Nea Ekklesia complex built by Basil I. Significantly, access to it could be controlled. See P. Magdalino, 'Observations on the Nea Ekklesia of Basil I', *JÖB*, 37 (1987), 51-64, esp. 61-3 with n. 70.
[55] *Al.*, XV.ix.4, L, III, 225.14-16, S, 502.
[56] *Al.*, XV.ix.4, L, III, 225.16-20, S, 502.
[57] *Al.*, XV.ix.4, L, III, 225.22-24, S, 502.

all a ruse to provide hard evidence against the Bogomils.[58] The Christians, or rather those who had chosen to die on a pyre with cross, were released with much good advice from Alexios on how to avoid such accusations in future, the emperor's role as teacher being once more brought to the fore. The Bogomils were incarcerated, receiving food and clothes with daily visits from clergy charged with instructing them in the errors of their ways. Basil's twelve apostles[59] were kept apart, no doubt to remove the great mass from their influence. If the Bogomils recanted, they were released, but others died in their heretical chains, though Anna makes us aware that their deaths were not due to mistreatment by Alexios.[60] Anna Komnene makes it clear that only after Alexios had had many conversations with Basil, and was convinced that there was no chance of him repenting, that he decided on the dire punishment, and agreed with the decision of the church authorities. The location chosen for the execution was the hippodrome of the city, and it seems to have been stage-managed to be as visible as possible.[61] That this entire episode was conducted with at least one eye on the audience is confirmed by Anna's opening sentence: 'There was a crowd of heretics [there] to see their leader Basil'.[62]

[58] *Al.*, XV.ix.4, L, III, 225.24-27, S, 502. Leib III, 264 cites F. Dölger, *Regesten*, 1272 (c.1117).

[59] *Al.*, XV.ix.4, L, III, 225.29, S, 502.

[60] *Al.*, XV.ix.4, L, III, 225-6.27-8, S, 502; Leib refers to Buckler's account of the punishment meted out to the Bogomils. L, III, 226, n.1, reference to Buckler, *Anna Comnena*, 94, nn.2-3, which in turn refers to Euthymios Zigabenos's *Panoplia Dogmatike* in *PG* 130,1360 (not very relevant in this particular case) and 1332C; problems exist, however, in using the testimony of Zigabenos to prove that the burning of Basil the Bogomil was not a cruel and unusual punishment. The major difficulty is the extent to which Anna Komnene and Euthymios Zigabenos are independent witnesses. The second consideration must be the way in which Zigabenos says that the civil and ecclesiastical authorities joined together in determining that these heretics should be burnt. This seems to be closely related to the description of what happened to Basil, given by Anna Komnene: 'all (the members) of the holy synod, and the leaders of the monks and the patriarch Nicholas judged him worthy of the fire.' *Alexiad*, XV.x.1, L, III, 226.10-12, S, 502.

[61] *Al.*, XV.x.1, L, III, 226.16-18.

[62] *Al.*, XV.x.2, L, III, 226.24-25, S, 503.

Basil also played to the audience,[63] though his confidence gave way when he confronted the fire.[64] A moment of tranquillity followed, as Basil seemed rooted to the spot, moving neither forward nor back. This was the crucial moment in the unfolding drama. The spectators gathered round expected some great event to release the tension. Either the heretic would be burnt and the orthodox would be vindicated, or the prophecies made by Basil would be fulfilled, and the Bogomils would be shown triumphant. The executioners feared that the demons associated with Basil might achieve some great coup (though only with the permission of God, Anna is careful to point out[65]) and so they decided to put Basil to the test, so that the second fault (being saved from the fire by a demon, who may or may not be the real God) might not be even greater than the first fault (the introduction of heresy into the capital in the first place)[66] Anna reiterates the notion of Alexios as protector as well as righteous avenger, as she makes it clear that it was the actions of the emperor that prevented the crowd from lynching the rest of the Bogomils there and then, and making them join Basil on the pyre. The Bogomils were imprisoned in the *stoai* and galleries of the Imperial Palace,[67] but were then transferred to some other prison,[68] where after many years, they eventually died in their impiety.[69]

The description of the restoration of the *Orphanotropheion* in the final paragraph of chapter ten of Book XV serves to round out Anna Komnene's portrayal of her father as the great emperor rather than merely as a lucky general. It reinforces the view that Alexios's orthodoxy in the suppression of heresy and his philanthropy in founding the *Orphanotropheion* are just as important to

[63] *Al.*, XV.x.2, L, III, 226.25-30; the quotation from David is from Ps. 91:7-8, which continues: 'And see the reward of the wicked'.

[64] *Al.*, XV.x.2, L, III, 227.7-8, S, 503.

[65] *Al.*, XV.x.3, L, III, 227.28, S, 503.

[66] *Al.*, XV.x.3, L, III, 227-8.26-1, S, 503.

[67] See P. Magdalino, 'Manuel Komnenos and the Great Palace', *BMGS*, 4 (1978), 111 n.48 for use of the Great Palace as a prison.

[68] *Al.*, XV.x.4, L, III, 228.27-28, S, 504.

[69] *Al.*, XV.x.4, L, III, 228.29, S, 504.

Anna's conception and presentation of her father's greatness as his feats of *andreia* on the battlefield.[70]

Italos

If the case of Basil the Bogomil is famous because of the punishment meted out to him, then the trial of John Italos is well-known because of the extent to which it has exercised the minds of many, who have attempted to discover exactly what was going on. Anna's detailed account of the Italos affair occupies a two chapter section at the end of Book V. Its position here means that it follows on from an extensive treatment of Alexios's campaigns against the Normans. Anna establishes her father as a defender of orthodoxy to balance his prowess in battle, and this was done in the midst of preparations to move against Bryennios[71] who was occupying Kastoria.[72] Returning from campaign, Alexios had no peace, for ecclesiastical matters were in uproar.[73] The function of this portrayal of John Italos then becomes clear: being an apostle,[74] Alexios lost no time in coming to the aid of the church, disturbed by the teachings of Italos.[75] These were very popular, and were profoundly disturbing the Church.[76] Whilst the matters which are said to have provoked the concern of the emperor were Italos's dogmas, yet Anna chooses to concentrate on the man himself. Anna presents Italos as a totally unsympathetic character.[77] We are told

[70] *Al.*, XV.x.5, L, III, 228-9.29-1, S, 504.
[71] *Al.*, V.vi.1, L, II, 28.6-7, S, 170.
[72] *Al.*, V.viii.1, L, II, 32.24-29, S, 173.
[73] *Al.*, V.viii.1, L, II, 32.24-26, S, 173.
[74] *Al.*, V.viii.1, L, II, 32.26, S, 174.
[75] *Al.*,V.viii.1, L, II, 22.27, S, 174.
[76] *Al.*,V.viii.1, L, II, 33.1-2, S, 174.
[77] Cf. *Timarion*, ch. 43-44, lines 1077-1121, ed. R. Romano, *Timarione* (Byz et NeoHell Neap, 2, Naples, 1974), 88-89, B. Baldwin, *Timarion. Translation with introduction and commentary* (BBT, Detroit, 1984), 72-74, 131-137, in which Italos is shown with one redeeming feature, in that he refuses to cast off the mantle of the Galilaeans; note also Constantine Niarchos's suggestion that Italos is the addressee of Theophylact's ep. G100 (Meurs XLV), ed. P. Gautier, *Théophylacte d'Achrida, II, Lettres* (CFHB, 14/2, Thessalonike, 1986), 509-11: *Τῷ φιλοσόφῳ κυρῷ Ἰωάννῃ*. See M.E. Mullett, *Theophylact through his letters: the*

that Italos came originally from Italy, and then had spent some time on Sicily.[78] When George Maniakes regained Sicily for the Byzantines in the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos (1042-55), Italos and his father went as refugees to Langobardia, an area still under Byzantine control.[79] From Langobardia Italos eventually found his way to Constantinople, though Anna Komnene maintains that she does not know the means whereby this was achieved.[80] Italos's arrival in Constantinople was probably sometime between 1040 and 1050.[81] At that time, education and learning in the capital were undergoing a revival, most notably under the leadership of Michael Psellos, appointed consul of the philosophers in 1045, by Constantine IX Monomachos. However, Anna leads us to believe that from Basil II until Constantine IX learning received little attention: it was with Alexios that a new period of interest in learning in all its forms began.[82] Italos's teachers were 'rough schoolmen, of rustic habits (for there were some of that sort in the ruling [City] then)'.[83] After his basic literary education at the hands of such men, Italos then encountered Michael Psellos.[84] The contrast between Italos and Psellos is drawn pointedly. Psellos had had little recourse to school teachers.[85] However, added to his natural ability, Psellos had the advantage of divine Grace, obtained through the intercessions of his mother to the icon of the Mother of God in the Church of the Saviour.[86] The differences that separated Psellos and Italos were wide, even though Italos was in theory pupil to Psellos's guiding hand. Italos's barbaric and un-

two worlds of an exile bishop (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 1981), II, 756; there is nothing in the letter to support this suggestion.
[78] *Al.*, V.viii.1, L, I, 33.3-5, S, 174.
[79] *Al.*, V.viii.2, L, I, 33.14-19, S, 174.
[80] *Al.*, V.viii.2, L, I, 33.19-21, S, 174.
[81] J. Gouillard, 'Le synodikon de l'orthodoxie', *TM*, 2 (1967), 188.
[82] *Al.*, V.viii.2, L, II, 33.21-30, S, 174-175.
[83] *Al.*, V.viii.3, L, II, 34.2-4, S, 175. The implication is that though Italos learnt from rude schoolmen in the capital, in the reign of Alexios such rustics were not the teachers.
[84] *Al.*, V.viii.3, L, II, 34.4-5, S, 175.
[85] *Al.*, V.viii.3, L, II, 34.6, S, 175.
[86] *Al.*, V.viii.3, L, II, 34.7-11, S, 175.

schooled nature,[87] coupled with his inability to accept a master, even to further his education, meant for Anna that he was unable to penetrate very far into the mysterious depths of philosophy.[88]

Italos was driven by a boldness and barbaric folly,[89] which meant he believed himself equal to or better than every one. Straightaway, even before his studies were completed, he set himself up in opposition to Psellos.[90] Italos was devoted to dialectic, setting forth all his proofs as sophistic arguments, where each proposition rested upon the reasoning of its predecessors. His passion for dialectic caused daily disturbances in public gatherings.[91] It is important to remember that Anna is not intent on showing Italos as he was. Rather, his story is adapted to the needs of the *Alexiad*. The Italos affair has two phases: an imperial trial in 1076-77 when certain theories, some of which had been identified with Italos's teaching, were condemned, but Italos's name was not mentioned;[92] and then, in 1082, Italos and his teaching were solemnly condemned, and he was banished to a monastery.[93] Gouillard states that the first trial is not mentioned by Anna Komnene.[94] However, Anna does record that Italos held the favour of the emperor Michael VII Doukas and his brothers.[95]

[87] *Al.*, V.viii.3, L, II, 34.14-15, S, 175.
[88] *Al.*, V.viii.3, L, II, 34.14-16, S, 175.
[89] *Al.*, V.viii.3, L, II, 34.16-17, S, 175.
[90] *Al.*, V.viii.3, L, II, 34.16-19, S, 175.
[91] *Al.*, V.viii.3, L, II, 34.19-23, S, 175.
[92] From the *semeioma* of March 1082, the synod of 1076-77 condemned the teachings of Italos as contrary to church dogma in nine chapters, without naming him. See Gouillard, 'Synodikon', 56-61, 189; Joannou, *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (1960) 1043; Paraskevopoulou, *Some aspects of the phenomenon of heresy*, 63. n.9; Grumel, *Régestes*, no.907; S. Salaville, 'Philosophie et théologie à Byzance de 1059 à 1117', *EO*, 33 (1930), 142; P. Stephanou, 'Jean Italos', *OC*, 134 (1949), 46-49.
[93] Paraskevopoulou, *Some aspects*, 62; Joannou, *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (1960) 1043.
[94] Gouillard, 'Synodikon', 189, n.35.
[95] *Al.*, V.viii.4, L, II, 34.25-27, S, 175. However the Doukai may be criticized only within clearly defined parameters: on the one hand, the Doukai formed an alternative powerbase which the Komnenoi have replaced; yet, at the same time, the Doukai and Komnenoi are united by marriage, and form a binary power nexus.

Anna then turns to a description of the man. It starts well: 'He was very well studied, able more than any other person to expound the peripatetic teachings, especially dialectic.'[96] However that was the high point from which one descended to reality.

> In other literary skills he was not so gifted, stumbling in grammar and he had not tasted the nectar of rhetoric. This was why his speech was not harmonious or well formed. His style was coarse and completely undecorated. His speech appeared with a frown, and exhaled bitterness. His arguments were loaded with dialectic, even more when he spoke than when he wrote.[97]

Through his dialectic Italos created ditches round his argument, which soon swallowed up any opponent. Italos's opponents had to face the socratic method, and no-one escaped the traps he set.[98] If his skill as a debater, if not as a rhetor, was unparalleled, in other ways he was rather vulgar, and governed completely by his temper.[99] This temper nullified whatever virtue he gained from his studies, for he argued not only with words as befitted a philosopher, but also with his hands, frequently physically attacking his opponents.[100] Even more than his propensity to violence, however, his rapidly changing nature showed how unsuited he was to the philosophical life.[101] Having dealt with Italos's strictly physical appearance;[102] Anna then turns to his manner of speaking, a suitable area of comment for a rhetor and teacher. She says that he spoke as if he were a Latin who had come to Byzantium as a child, and had never lost his accent.

Having dealt with the man, Anna Komnene then turns to his studies. In the list of philosophers she presents there are no great surprises. The greatest novelty was perhaps that Italos prided

[96] *Al.*, V.viii.6, L, II, 35.18-21, S, 176.
[97] *Al.*, V.viii.6, L, II, 35-6.21-3, S, 176.
[98] *Al.*, V.viii.6, L, II, 36.8-12, S, 176.
[99] *Al.*, V.viii.7, L, II, 36.12-13, S, 177.
[100] *Al.*, V.viii.7, L, II, 36.13-21, S, 177.
[101] *Al.*, V.viii.7, L, II, 36.22-4, S, 177.
[102] *Al.*, V.viii.7, L, II, 36-37.25-1, S, 177. Generally speaking favourable, with its concentration on his broad chest and sound wind, coupled with good proportion, even if he was a little below average size.

himself on the utility of his work.[103] The value of this utility was greatly reduced however, by Italos's inability to deal with his students. His temperament made him unsuited as a teacher.[104] Anna makes a veiled reference to the events of the first trial.[105] He was at the height of his popularity, but he treated all with contempt.[106] The focus shifts drastically from Italos to Alexios Komnenos. Finding learning an abandoned, if not lost, art, the new emperor encouraged scholarship, though he did express the preference that students should be well equipped in the knowledge of Scripture before they embarked upon an investigation of classical philosophy.[107] Were it not for the strong echo of Psellos in this section,[108] it would be tempting to say that what appears here is a rare difference between Anna Komnene and her father. Anna records that Italos came to the emperor's attention because he was leading many astray and causing trouble everywhere. He was given over to the *sebastokrator* Isaac for preliminary investigation.[109]

Isaac found that there was indeed a case to answer, and after he had publicly refuted Italos, sent him for trial before an ecclesiastical tribunal, on the emperor's orders. Before the tribunal, Anna says that he was unable to conceal his ignorance,[110] enunciated doctrines foreign to the church, and in the middle of the assembled clerics acted in an uneducated and barbaric way.[111] Eustathios Garidas, patriarch at the time, took Italos into a form of protective custody, but Anna remarks scathingly that the patriarch was as likely to be corrupted by Italos as Italos was to see the errors of his ways.[112] With this stalemate, all the people of Constantinople moved against the church (Hagia Sophia) apparently with the intent of seizing Italos bodily.[113] Anna implies that the reason for Alexios's great concern was that it was a topic of conversation among many of the courtiers and not a few of the better sort had become infected with his evil doctrines.[114] The doctrines which Italos was purported to have taught were summarized under eleven headings, and sent to the emperor.[115] Italos was to denounce them from the ambo of the Great Church (with his head bare) with the crowd listening and adding their voices to the anathemas.[116]

[103] *Al.*, V.ix.1, L, II, 37.14-17, S, 178.
[104] *Al.*, V.ix.1, L, II, 37.16-19, S, 178.
[105] *Al.*, V.ix.4, L, II, 38.27-28, S, 179.
[106] *Al.*, V.ix.4, L, II, 38.23-25, S, 179.
[107] *Al.*, V.ix 4, L, II, 38-39 28-6, S, 179.
[108] Psellos, *Chronographia*, III *Romanos* III ii-iii, ed. E. Renauld (Paris, 1967), I, 33.11-18.
[109] *Al.*, V.ix.5, L, II, 39.6-8, S, 179.
[110] *Al.*, V.ix.5, L, II, 39.12-3, S, 179.
[111] *Al.*, V.ix.5, L, II, 39.15-16, S, 179.
[112] *Al.*, V.ix.5, L, II, 39.16-22, S, 179.

Whilst the prominence Anna gives to the actions of Alexios as the driver of the entire episode could be due merely to her desire to establish Alexios as a guardian of orthodoxy against heresy, it does seem that the Italos affair was motivated more by imperial than ecclesiastical considerations. Italos soon returned to the teaching of the doctrines and was personally anathematised after he rejected the emperor's advice, with barbaric disorder.[117] Anna leaves us with the picture of a man who was trying to reach accommodation with the church authorities.[118] Italos did not set out to be heretical; as a philosopher, he carried to their logical conclusions his propositions. In doing so, he came under attack, not so much from the ecclesiastical hierarchy, most of whom, if they could understand what he was saying at all, were inculcated with similar desires for understanding. Rather the motivation for repression came from the emperor.

Neilos

The episode of Neilos is presented at the beginning of Book X, which deals mainly with the Cuman war of 1095 and the arrival of the first crusaders. In this it falls into the pattern Anna maintains, of placing Alexios's strivings on the battlefield always in the company of his actions against heretics. Anna opens her account of Neilos by stating that it occurred slightly after the condemnation

[113] *Al.*, V.ix.6, L, II, 39.24-27, S,180.
[114] *Al.*, V.ix.6, L, II, 39-40 27-1, S, 180.
[115] *Al.*, V.ix.6, L, II, 40.1-3, S, 180.
[116] *Al.*, V.ix.6, L, II, 40.3-7, S, 180.
[117] *Al.*, V.ix.7, L, II, 40.9-10, S, 180.
[118] *Al.*, V.ix.7, L, II, 40.18-22, S, 180.

of the heretical dogmas of Italos.[119] Skoulatos places the action in 1082-83, whilst Gouillard places it later in 1087.[120] Neilos invaded the church, troubling the spirits of all.[121] Again the seriousness of the case is emphasized.[122] She adds credence to Gouillard's contention that the *Synodikon of orthodoxy* was concerned primarily with Christological heresies, and that that is why many of the other heretics condemned under the Komnenoi are notable by their absence.[123] Part of Neilos's appeal was that he was well used to simulating virtue.[124] Anna then goes on to state that she does not know where he came from.[125]

The primary description of Neilos seems to be without reproach: he seemed to pay attention to God and himself alone, busying himself with the study of the Scriptures.[126] The agony is piled on, as the lack of a teacher to instruct him in the true depth of Scripture forced him to turn to the writings of the saints directly. His total lack of logical training led him to wander from the meaning of writings into heresy.[127] Neilos found favour in several of the great houses of Constantinople,[128] partly because of his apparent virtue and ascetic life, but also because of his supposed

[119] *Al.*, X.i.1, L, II, 187.3-4, S, 293.
[120] Skoulatos, *Les personnages*, 258; Gouillard, 'Synodikon', 184.
[121] *Al.*, X.i.1, L, II, 187.1-3, S, 293.
[122] *Al.*, X.i.1, L, II, 187.4-5, S, 293.
[123] Gouillard, 'Synodikon', 184-5.
[124] *Al.*, X.i.1, L, II, 187.5-6, S, 293.
[125] *Al.*, X.i.1, L, II, 187.6, S, 293, though we learn from his abjuration that Neilos described himself, or was instructed by the ecclesiastical authorities to describe himself, as coming from Calabria (Gouillard, 'Synodikon', 303.53). Given that Neilos was a heretic, or rather is to be condemned as one, it is interesting that Anna does not emphasise that he was not a true Byzantine, but yet another foreigner like Italos from Southern Italy. This surely raises the point that perhaps she was not aware of his origins, for she does mention that he was not from the capital, describing him as staying in the Great City, but not his more exotic origin (*Al.*, X.i.1, L, II, 187.6-7, S, 293). Gouillard suggests that Anna's ignorance about his origins may have been feigned to emphasize his insignificance. Gouillard, ibid, 202 n.149.
[126] *Al.*, X.i.1, L, II, 187.7-9, S, 293.
[127] *Al.*, X i 1, L, II, 187.10-14, S, 293.
[128] *Al.*, X i 2, L, II, 187.14-15, S, 293.

possession of secret knowledge.[129] The crux of Neilos's failure was in his incorrect comprehension of the hypostatic union in the person of Christ of the human and divine natures. It is easy enough to understand how, without a training in the philosophy that underpinned it, the theory of hypostatic union would be a source of error.[130]

With the character of Neilos and his heresy well established, Anna then introduces her father.[131] Neilos was summoned to the imperial presence, his boldness and ignorance upbraided, his errors confounded, and he was instructed in the true hypostatic union of the God-Man Logos. Alexios set forth the manner of reciprocal relations [between the two natures] and also with Divine Grace[132] taught how they become divine.[133] In spite of all the efforts of the emperor, Neilos remained convinced of his false doctrine.[134] No threat of physical punishment could cause him to stop teaching that the 'addition' became divine by nature.[135]

As Anna recounts the story, one of the major reasons why Alexios was so concerned with the activities of Neilos becomes clear; it was his influence on the large number of Armenians in the capital.[136] Connected with this introduction of the Armenians is the qustion how they were influenced by Neilos. Were Neilos and the Armenians arguing in the same way, or were the Armenian monophysites goaded to further extremes of their own doctrine by

[129] *Al.*, X i 2, L, II, 187.15-18, S, 293.
[130] See Buckler, *Anna Comnena*, 324-9, and Gouillard, 'Synodikon' 61ff. The actual supposed heresy of Neilos, with its intricate theological argument does not require elaboration here.
[131] *Al.*, X i 3, L, II,188.3-4, S, 294.
[132] *Al.*, X.i.3, L, II, 188.10, S, 294. This mention of Divine Grace is to protect Alexios from the charge that he was claiming to understand by reason the things of God.
[133] *Al.*, X.i.3, L, II, 188 7-10, S, 294. The vocabulary in this paragraph and in X.i.2 is parallel to the so-called *Speech against the Armenians*, Cod. Sabb. 366, fol.246a-249a, ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, I (St Petersburg, 1891), 116-23 (text only).
[134] *Al.*, X.i.3, L, II, 188.10-1, S, 294.
[135] *Al.*, X.i.3, L, II. 188.11-13, S, 294.
[136] *Al.*,X.i.4, L, II, 188.14-18, S, 294. On Tigranes, see Skoulatos, *Les personnnages*, 298; Arsaces is not mentioned by Skoulatos.

what they saw as the unbearable heresy of Neilos? Buckler identifies Neilos and the Armenians as sharing in the same heresy,[137] but Jean Gouillard presents the view that Neilos should be seen as a Nestorian rather than a Monophysite, and that the actions taken against Neilos by Alexios were to ensure that the orthodox Chalcedonians were not seen as Nestorians by the Armenians.[138] Anna presents Alexios as being forced into action by several considerations. The way in which the Greek is arranged seems to stress the number of souls led astray by the heresy;[139] this is in keeping with Anna's intention throughout the work to praise her father as a guardian of orthodox souls as well as bodies. In addition to his concern for the wellbeing of ordinary believers, Alexios was also aware of the mixing of the teachings of the Armenians and Neilos; of the public proclamation of the notion that the human nature of Christ had been deified; of the rejection of the words of the Fathers on these subjects and of the fact that the hypostatic union was poorly understood.[140] As well as a strictly constructed ecclesiastical aspect, given the negotiations with the Armenians such desire for rigour in definitions could be said to have a political aspect as well.

Alexios decided to combat the great evil and summoned the dignitaries of the Church to appear before him. When they had gathered, he decided that the proper way forward was for a synod to be held to determine what should be done.[141] It would seem that Anna was concerned that the treatment of Neilos might be criticised as not having been carried out in the proper fashion. She stresses, as in the Italos case, that the synod was composed of the whole body of the clergy and the patriarch Nicholas.[142] Neilos

[137] Buckler, *Anna Comnena*, 324-329, esp. 324 '...Nilos, who with his Armenian followers...'.
[138] Gouillard, 'Synodikon', 202-206.
[139] *Al.*, X.i.4, L, II,188.18-19, S, 294.
[140] *Al.*, X.i.4, L, II, 188.19-24, S, 294.
[141] *Al.*, X.i.4, L, II, 188.24-26, S, 294.
[142] *Al.*, X.i.5, L, II, 188.26-28, S, 294. The mention of the patriarch Nicholas provides a date *post quem*, as Nicholas was appointed to the patriarchal throne in 1084; see Gouillard, 'Synodikon', 203.

stood in the midst of the council, with the Armenians,[143] and defended his teachings in a loud voice.[144] The synod (yet again the justification is given that this was done so that many souls might be saved from the doctrine)[145] placed Neilos under an anathema.[146]

As a postscript to the teachings of Neilos, Anna then recounts the episode concerning Theodore Blachernites. An ordained priest,[147] he was mixed up with the 'enthusiasts,' whom Zigabenos identifies with the Massalians.[148] Anna does not explicitly outline his errors, but his story resembles that of Neilos. Blachernites wormed his way into the great houses and taught many false dogmas.[149] In the normal fashion—at least as it is presented in the *Alexiad*—Blachernites was summoned many times[150] before the emperor, who attempted to show him the error of his ways and to instruct him in orthodoxy. As Blachernites persisted in his error, Alexios sent him before the church authorities.[151] After a lengthy examination, they recognized that he was incorrigible, and placed him under anathema, together with his teaching.[152]

[143] *Al.*, X.i.5, L, II, 188-189.22-1, S, 294; on representations of heretics standing before councils, see C. Walter, 'Heretics in Byzantine art', *ECR*, 3 (1970), 40-49, repr. *Studies in Byzantine iconography* (London, 1977), VII.
[144] *Al.*, X.i.5, L, II, 189.1-3, S, 295.
[145] *Al.*, X.i.5, L, II, 189.4-5, S, 295.
[146] *Al.*, X.i.5, L, II, 189.5-7, S, 295. It seems that the denunciation of Neilos was the occasion for the composition of Alexios's 'Speech against the Armenians'. Text: ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, I (St Petersburg, 1891), 116-23; introduction 113-6. Cited in Buckler *Anna Comnena*, 328 and Sharf, 'Armenians and Byzantines at the time of Alexius I Comnenus', *Confrontation and Coexistence=Bar-Ilan Studies in History*, 2 (1984), 103; translation with commentary in *Alexios I Komnenos*, II, *Works* (BBTT, 4.2, Belfast, 1996).
[147] *Al.*, X.i.6, L, II, 189.9, S, 295; Leib describes him as 'dans les saints ordres'; Sewter (295) describes him as being 'an ordained priest'; whilst Skoulatos (294) refers to him as a 'moine', without comment.
[148] Zigabenos, *Πανοπλία δογματική*, ch.26, *PG*, 130, 1273.
[149] *Al.*, X.i.6, L, II, 189.11-12, S, 295.
[150] *Al.*, X.i.6, L, II, 189.13, S, 295.
[151] *Al.*, X.i.6, L, II, 189.13-16, S, 295; see also Grumel, *Régestes*, III, 45, no. 946.
[152] On the punishment, see Niketas of Heraclea, ed. Darrouzès, 304. 26-27.

Leo of Chalcedon

The treatment of Leo, metropolitan of Chalcedon, presents something of an unusual case. It occurs in Book V of the *Alexiad*, and it might be assumed that Leo of Chalcedon was being cast in the same role of heretic as John Italos was later in the same book. Such an inference would be false. Book V opens with the Normans under Guiscard advancing in triumph through the Balkans. In the opening sentence Anna remarks that Guiscard 'took away for himself, completely unhindered, all the booty.'[153] This concern with money dominates the first chapter of Book V, and also serves to introduce the episode with Leo of Chalcedon. Alexios was in dire need of cash to raise new troops, but there was no cash, and the imperial treasury was empty.[154] In the final paragraph of this first chapter of Book V, Anna Komnene presents Alexios as having two choices: he could abdicate, in order to avoid any suggestion that he was inexperienced in war and ignorant of command,[155] or out of necessity he could call on allies, gathering whatever money he could to satisfy them, whilst using bribes to encourage the native troops to return to him, hopefully bolstered in morale by the strengthening presence of the allies. Anna states that Alexios's decision was grounded in his desire not to do anything dishonourable, nor out of keeping with his understanding of warfare, nor his own daring.[156] The destitute nature of the imperial treasury forced Anna Dalassene and the *sebastokrator* Isaac to send their own personal treasure to be minted. Anna Dalassene and Isaac the *sebastokrator* discussed many options, both individually and in common.[157]

The search of canon law revealed that it was permissible to use church treasure to redeem captives. Anna establishes that because of their intercourse with the infidels, the Christians of Asia were obviously little better than captives and in need of redemption.[158] Anna adds to her justification by emphasizing that the

[153] *Al.*, V.i.1, L, II, 7.1-2, S, 155.
[154] *Al.*, V.i.4, L, II, 9.10-17, S, 156.
[155] *Al.*, V.i.5, L, II, 9.21-2, S, 157.
[156] *Al.*,V.i.5, L, II, 9-10.29-2, S, 157.
[157] *Al.*,V.ii.2, L, II,10.26-27, S, 157.
[158] *Al.*, V.ii.2, L, II, 11.2-5, S, 157.

number of items concerned was very small, that they had not been used in the liturgy for quite some time, and that the fact of their being left to one side had given rise to sacrilegious robbery and impiety.[159] When Anna Dalassene and Isaac Komnenos made the decision, the *sebastokrator* went to the resident synod, where he explained the reason for his visit. Isaac presented the plan as offering the means of dealing with the 'violent irruption in public affairs and the salvation of the army.'[160] Isaac cited the various items from the canons concerning cultic objects no longer in use. He then concluded with a not very veiled threat.[161] Rather than *force majeur*, however, his high-minded arguments quickly convinced the majority.[162] Anna then introduces Leo, metropolitan of Chalcedon. The way in which he is described is very important: 'He was not very wise, nor learned, yet he cultivated goodness, but his manner was austere and hard.'[163] He is criticised for lack of learning, but his virtue is not shown as a pretence. The removal of the gold and silver from the doors of the Chalkoprateia church provoked the first response from Leo of Chalcedon.

> He went into the middle (of the action), and held forth, without any consideration for *oikonomia* or the canons and laws relating to holy things.[164]

Each time he returned to the capital, Leo was most insolent and totally undisciplined in his attitude towards the ruler, trying his forbearance and charity.[165] At first, Anna separates Leo of Chalcedon's opposition to secularization from his opposition to Alexios. However, when in the interlude between the Norman campaign and the attack of the Patzinaks, Alexios was in the

[159] *Al.*, V.ii.2, L, II, 11.5-10, S, 157. On the number of objects seized, see V. Grumel, 'L'affaire de Léon de Chalcédoine: le chrysobulle d'Alexis Ier sur les objets sacrés', *REB*, 2 (1944), 127.
[160] *Al.*, V.ii.3, L, II, 11.16-17, S, 158.
[161] *Al.*, V.ii.3, L, II, 11.20-21, S, 158.
[162] *Al.*, V.ii.3, L, II, 11.21, S, 158.
[163] *Al.*, V.ii.4, L, II, 11.29-31, S, 159.
[164] *Al.*, V.ii.4, L, II, 12 2-4, S, 159.
[165] *Al.*, V.ii.4, L, II, 12.4-7, S, 159.

capital and called for more money to be raised by the alienation of ecclesiastical objects, Leo of Chalcedon attacked the emperor.[166] As would be expected, this opposition provoked long discussion,[167] in the course of which Leo expressed ideas in keeping with his status as a bishop, but also ideas that were not in keeping with orthodoxy.[168] Having a very low opinion of his intellectual abilities,[169] Anna believed Leo's opposition stemmed from misguided ignorance rather than from direct opposition. His attitude towards the emperors became more extreme, in large part encouraged by evil-wishers, of whom there were many in the civil government.[170] Leo of Chalcedon was encouraged to more vociferous opposition to Alexios by the office-holders. This was in spite of the fact that a reconciliation had been achieved between Alexios and the leading members of the synod, and that Alexios had promised restitution of the treasures taken from the church. Leo was called upon to retract his false understanding of the doctrine of images. This would have been in 1082. He was removed from his see. However, this did not silence him. The constancy he displayed attracted more followers to his cause. Eventually, in 1086, Leo of Chalcedon was exiled to Sozopolis in Pontos. In common with other dissidents, Leo was accorded every comfort, but it seemed that he harboured some manner of grudge against Alexios.[171]

The most curious part of Anna Komnene's treatment of Leo of Chalcedon occurs during her account of the battle of Dristra in 1087.[172] The Byzantine forces had been routed by the Patzinaks and were in flight; Alexios himself, after suitable displays of bravery, was persuaded by the *protostrator* Michael Doukas that it was better for the emperor to 'withdraw to a position of

[166] *Al.*, V.ii.5, L, II, 12.18-21, S, 159.
[167] *Al.*, V.ii.5, L, II, 12.21-2, S, 159.
[168] *Al.*, V.ii.5, L, II, 12.22-5, S, 159.
[169] *Al.*, V.ii.5, L, II, 12-13.27-2, S, 159.
[170] *Al.*, V.ii.6, L, II, 13.3-4, S, 159. Vestiges of the complex chronology outlined by Grumel in *REB*, 2 (1944), 333-341 can be discerned in the account rendered by Anna.
[171] *Al.*, V.ii.6, L, II,13.20-22, S, 160.
[172] *Al.*, VII.iv.1, L, II, 101-102, S, 227-228.

strength and regroup' rather than fall on the battlefield, largely to no purpose.[173] Anna continues with an account of what befell George Palaiologos on the battlefield.[174] While searching for his horse, George saw Leo, bishop of Chalcedon.[175] Whereas Anna Komnene is usually content to make second mention of people without referring to their first appearance in the *Alexiad*, here she specifically draws our attention to what she has already said about Leo of Chalcedon.[176] This apparition of Leo is given the tone of a holy visitation, and one feels that rehabilitation is being effected here. Gautier, in his prosopographical study of the Blachernai synod of 1094,[177] notes the way in which Leo of Chalcedon's appearance is described almost in terms of a vision or apparition, but then moves on to the matter concerning him at that point, namely the dating of the Blachernai synod, and how that Leo's appearance in the dress of a bishop in the course of the battle of Dristra indicates that at that time he had not yet been stripped of his rank.

In the vision, Leo is described as being dressed in clerical vestments and offers his horse to George Palaiologos, who takes it and flees, never seeing the venerable man again.[178] Anna describes Leo as being forthright in spirit and displaying the true characteristic of a bishop; however, his mind was simple and he displayed enthusiasm not moderated by discernment, and he did not have accurate understanding of the divine canons.[179] This weakness in his understanding was the reason for the loss of his see, which again Anna describes as having been outlined previously. Anna concludes her treatment of Leo of Chalcedon with

[173] *Al.*, VII.iii.10-11, L, II, 99-100, S, 225-226. For Michael Doukas.the Protostrator see Skoulatos, *Les personnages*, 202-205. It is interesting to note that Michael Doukas was one of the principal signatories of the process against Leo of Chalcedon in 1094 at the synod of the Blachernai. P. Gautier, 'Le synode des Blachernes (fin 1094), étude prosopographique', *REB*, 29 (1971), 213-284.
[174] *Al.*, VII.iv.1, L, II, 101 23-25, S, 227.
[175] *Al.*, VII.iv.1, L, II, 101.27-28, S, 227.
[176] *Al.*, VII.iv.1, L, II, 101.28, S, 227.
[177] Gautier, 'Synode des Blachernes', 216, n.15.
[178] *Al.*, VII.iv.1, L, II, 102.2-3, S, 227.
[179] *Al.*, VII iv 1, L, II, 102.3-7, S, 227.

the rather enigmatic statement describing the visitation as arising either from George Palaiologos's devotion, or from some unknown divine purpose.[180]

Conclusion

Individual heretics in Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* are cast into outsider roles, more frequently because of political expediency or the desire to improve Alexios's image than because of some religious disagreement. This is not to say that heresy is without a spiritual dimension, without a theological difference, but merely that the presence of the heretics in the *Alexiad* is due more to Anna Komnene's desire to show her father to be a champion of orthodoxy and indeed the equal of the Apostles than to any presence of heretics in the capital which forced decisions on the authorities. The definition, ritual and actual persecution of heretics is a positive decision taken by those in authority;[181] the absence or presence of people holding beliefs at variance with the official line is actually irrelevant. Anna Komnene uses the persecution of heretics to stress Alexios I's abilities with words as well as with arms.[182] As to whether Alexios I Komnenos was personally interested in heresy it is much more difficult to form an opinion. Clucas has written:

> a tough, intellectually conservative orthodox autocrat was not likely to tolerate speculation on matters pertaining to the traditionally uncriticizable corpus of dogma at a time of national crisis, particularly inasmuch as the Byzantine state drew much of its self-justification from its self-appointed role as the guardian and political expression of inviolable and perfect Christian religious truth.[183]

[180] *Al.*, VII.iv.1, L, II, 102.10-14, S, 227.
[181] Moore, *Persecuting society*, 68.
[182] Gress-Wright, 'Bogomilism in Constantinople', 167.
[183] L. Clucas, *The trial of John Italos and the crisis of intellectual values in Byzantium in the eleventh century* (MiscByzMon, 26, Munich, 1981), 120.

Whilst this is probably true, it involves an intellectual leap to assume that Alexios was interested in heresy as heresy rather than as a manifestation of opposition to be crushed; the heretics were an opposing voice, the removal of whom served to bolster the Komnenian regime.

13

Anna Komnene and the *Alexiad*

James Howard-Johnston

Historians, whatever their field of enquiry, whether remote or close at hand, prize documentary sources above all others. For documents alone will yield that mass of precise particulars upon which a respectable work of history should be based. This is as true of the medievalist as of the contemporary historian. But documents are hard to use by themselves. For how on earth is the historian to know what attention, if any, was paid to their contents at the time, what value, if any, was attached to the recommendations they made? There is no substitute for the knowledge and understanding of insiders, participants in a position to know what mattered and what was going on behind the scenes, perhaps deliberately masked by the extant bureaucratic paperwork. First-hand experience of the subject-matter, whether acquired directly through active involvement or indirectly through systematic observation over a considerable time (as in the case of journalists or the field work of social scientists) is essential if significant issues, leading protagonists, key factors influencing decisions and outcomes are to be picked out. This sort of inside knowledge all too soon slips out of the grasp of historians, as their subject-matter recedes from them through time, but they must still feel around for it, hoping to acquire it vicariously from the correspondence, memoirs or histories written by those contemporaries in a position to know and with a proper endowment of good sense.

There is nothing startling in remarks of this sort. Such indeed have been the everyday working practices of historians over the centuries. Eyewitness testimony, autopsy, was highly prized from the first in classical antiquity. The authority of an ancient historian stemmed to a large extent from the closeness of his connection

with the events which he was reporting and explaining. Ideally historians should have played a part in many of the episodes of their histories, as Thucydides, Caesar, Ammianus and Procopius all did. Where this did not happen, they were expected to turn to the evidence of contemporaries who were participants and witnesses. Direct perception was the ultimate source of the raw material of history, and the historian was expected to strive to approach it. Personal participation in affairs provided the best induction into the functioning of the body politic at war and at peace, and the historian who lacked this qualification was expected to make it his business to learn from those who did have it.[1] Where the vital element of understanding based on first-hand or second-hand experience was lacking—as, for example, in the cases of Agathias and Theophylact Simocatta when they were dealing with military matters—serious as well as a general impoverishment of history could result.[2]

There were, it is true, other important ingredients which went into the making of classical histories: state papers (especially military dispatches sent back from the field and treaty documents), private archives kept by the great and the good, memoirs or biographies of the same based upon the papers in those archives (written and circulated to boost their self-esteem or to forward a political career), accounts of the geography of distant places, and other varieties of written evidence, including the works of other historians.[3] But it is a peculiar feature of the classical tradition of history-writing that use of such humdrum sources was not advertised. No special merit was attached to this basic, mechanical work, hence there was no call for the historian to flaunt it (and the value of citations of sources was not appreciated until the appearance of Islam). It was, probably, taken for granted and then delib-

[1] A.D. Momigliano, *Studies in historiography* (London, 1966), 128-131, 135-136, 211-217.

[2] Averil Cameron, *Agathias* (Oxford, 1970), 1-11, 30-56, 131-137; M. Whitby, *The emperor Maurice and his historian: Theophylact Simocatta on Persian and Balkan warfare* (Oxford, 1988), 28-33, 92-109, 222-242, 311-321.

[3] F.E. Adcock, *Caesar as man of letters* (Cambridge, 1956), 6-18 for a brief, suggestive discussion of the documentary base of contemporary history under the late republic.

erately concealed in the course of adding that literary sheen to a work of history which was taken to be the real gauge of its worth. Historians saw themselves as writers more than scholars.[4]

Byzantine historians with pretensions to literary elegance were well aware of the standards set by the classical tradition of history-writing. There was a perceptible rise in their aspirations and the quality of their output after the prolonged military crisis of the dark age had eased during the middle decades of the ninth century. A high valuation was put on the first-hand knowledge which was needed if a historian, at work in any culture, was to irradiate his or her narrative with sound interpretation. By the second quarter of the twelfth century, when Anna Komnene was at work on the *Alexiad*, the classicising tradition dominated the field.[5] It is plain that she was as concerned as any of her distant classical predecessors with literary patina and prized linguistic virtuosity and displays of learning at least as highly as solidity and accuracy of historical substance. It is plain too that she was well aware of the historian's need for close contact with her subject-matter, since she stresses the advantages of her position for observing events directly and for gathering information from key participants at the time.[6]

It is natural then to turn to Anna's *Alexiad* and ask how much of its contents was based on her autopsy or that of her immediate circle, how much of it can be related to her first- or second-hand experience. This is an important question. For, on the analogy with those writing contemporary history at that and other times, her own first-hand experience, supplemented by her own particular prime interests, was likely to have a profound influence on her

[4] Cf. J. Matthews, *The Roman empire of Ammianus* (London, 1989), 452-472; R.C. Blockley, *The fragmentary classicising historians of the later Roman empire*, I (Liverpool, 1981), 90-94.

[5] R. Browning, 'Byzantine literature', *Dictionary of the middle ages*, ed. J.R. Strayer (New York, 1982-89), II, 505-521 (513-515).

[6] Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, XV.vii.9, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols (Paris, 1937-45), III, 218, tr. E.R.A. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1988), 495-496 (style); *Al.*, XIV.vii.4-5, L, III, 174-175, S, 459-460 (sources). Cf. J. Chrysostomides, 'A Byzantine historian: Anna Comnena', *Medieval historical writing in the Christian and Islamic worlds*, ed. D.O. Morgan (London, 1982), 30-46 (30-34).

choice of material. Information which caught her attention initially was more likely to lodge in her memory and make its way eventually into her text. The extent to which she could then fill out this core of autoptic matter would depend upon the degree of her interest in matters falling outside her own arenas of thought and activity, which would in turn determine the level of her appetite for gathering vicarious experiences from her relatives and friends and her ability to make sense of them.

Anna's life and her contribution to the *Alexiad*

The main sources of information about Anna's life and interests are occasional asides in the *Alexiad* where she refers to herself, accounts of her principal attested forays into politics before and after her father's death, and a funerary laudation which was delivered by George Tornikes some time after her death, probably in 1155. Only the sketchiest of biographies can be constructed out of this material, one that is articulated around the key events of her life—her birth on 2 December 1083 which made her the eldest of Alexios's children, her early betrothal to Constantine Doukas, son of the emperor Michael VII (1071-8), her marriage (after Constantine's early death) to Nikephoros Bryennios, a member of another magnate family with pretensions to imperial power,[7] her enthusiastic participation in her mother's campaign to have him designated Alexios's successor and her instigation of a plot in his favour within a year of her brother John's accession,[8] which resulted in her early and enforced retirement to a nunnery, where she lived in

[7] A. Kazhdan, 'Die Liste der Kinder des Kaisers Alexios I. in der Moskauer Handschrift (ГИМ 53/147)', *Beiträge zur alten Geschichte und deren Nachleben. Festschrift für Franz Altheim zum 6. 10. 1968*, ed. tr. R. Stiehl and H.E. Stier (Berlin, 1969-70), II, 233-237 (234); *Al.*, VI.viii.1-3, L, II, 60-62, S, 196-197; John Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν*, XVIII.22, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst (CSHB, Bonn, 1897), III, 738-739. Anna and Nikephoros had at least four children, two sons (Alexios and John) and two daughters (Eirene and one whose name is not recorded)—the evidence is gathered together by P. Gautier, *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (CFHB, 9, Brussels, 1975), 30-31.

[8] Zonaras, XVIII.24 and 26, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 748 and 754-755; Niketas Choniates, *Χρονικὴ διήγησις*, ed. J.A. van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae historia* (CFHB, 11, Berlin/New York, 1975), I.4-7 and 10-12, tr. H.J. Magoulias, *O city of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit, 1984), 5-6, 8-9.

comfortable quarters, attended by a staff of private retainers, for the rest of her life.[9] Visitors, especially those of high status, were discouraged, but she evidently continued to see her husband Nikephoros, in spite of the estrangement which resulted from her act of political folly, which he had opposed.[10] Nikephoros died probably towards the end of 1138,[11] and Anna lived another fifteen years or so. The date of her death is not recorded.[12] There is nothing to indicate that she ventured much, if at all, outside the natural settings of her life, the Komnenian family and its affinity, the court and Constantinople, during Alexios's lifetime, when she was a free agent. It may therefore be inferred that her first-hand knowledge

[9] Anna's quarters were on the edge of the nunnery's precincts, overhanging and overlooking the garden of the neighbouring monastery of the Philanthropos. They were part of a complex of grand buildings (including a chapel, two baths, one internal and two outside courtyards), which her mother, the empress Eirene, had built for her own use and that of her children and retainers (male as well as female) in her foundation, the nunnery of the Theotokos Kecharitomene. After her mother's death (in 1133 or 1138) Anna was granted life-tenure of the whole complex, with the right to put up new buildings and to alter those already there (P. Gautier, 'Le typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè', *REB*, 43 (1985), 5-165, 136-139). Anna's staff included stablehands, one of whom on one occasion threatened to knife and beat up Tzetzes, John Tzetzes, ep. 55, ed. P.A.M. Leone (Leipzig, 1972), 75-77.

[10] *Al.*, XIV.vii.6, L, III, 175, S, 460-461. Had Nikephoros been forbidden to visit her, Anna would surely have said so, either here or in the prooemion where she mourns him (*Al.*, pr. iv, L, I, 6-8, S, 20-21).

[11] *Al.*, pr. iii.4, L, I, 6, S, 20. Gautier, *Bryennios*, 27-29.

[12] Anna was in the thirtieth year of her confinement when she wrote the *Alexiad*: *Al.*, XIV.vii.6, L, III, 175, S, 461. Her death must therefore postdate 1148. It took place before 1155 when George Tornikes delivered his funerary laudation, probably many months beforehand to judge by its measured tone, or. 14, ed. J. Darrouzès, *Georges et Dèmètrios Tornikès, Lettres et discours* (Le monde byzantin, Paris, 1970), 220-323. Since George, a protégé of Anna's, might have been expected to mention her death at the time in his correspondence—and he would have written a letter of consolation to her daughter Eirene, with whom he corresponded in 1155 (ep. 22, ed Darrouzès, 156-158)—her death should probably be placed in one of the gaps in the extant corpus of his letters. Of the two possible alternatives (the first half of 1153 or 1154), Darrouzès, 21-22, prefers the earlier, as does R. Browning, 'An unpublished funeral oration on Anna Comnena', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, n.s. 8 (1962), 1-12, 4.

of the events of the period was largely, if not entirely, confined to those that occurred within these metropolitan milieux.

The interests which preoccupied her and enabled her to range far afield from the immediate concerns of everyday life, both during her father's reign and the long period of seclusion which followed, are relatively well documented. She was first and foremost an intellectual. Niketas Choniates describes her as educated in every field of learning but devoted above all to philosophy.[13] The awakening of her intellectual aspirations is described in a charming autobiographical aside in the *Alexiad*: at meals she often watched as her mother read the theological works of the fathers of the church, amongst which those of Maximos Confessor were her favourites; Anna, who was but a child, marvelled at the sight, and on one occasion asked her mother how she was able to look up to such great heights, confessing that she trembled at the prospect and dared not listen to such things 'even with the tips of her ears'; her mother admitted to some trepidation herself but encouraged her young daughter, telling her to wait a while and bend over other books first, and then she would taste the sweetness of these ones.[14]

Her education was broad and embraced classical Greek, rhetoric, the treatises of Aristotle, the dialogues of Plato and the *quadrivium* of sciences (astronomy, geometry, arithmetic and music). So Anna informs us in the preface to the *Alexiad*.[15] She does not define the period of her studies in this passage, but it is likely that she is referring to reading and study which began when she was growing up but which was broadened and deepened in later life, in the long years of seclusion. This accords with the picture presented by George Tornikes, who notes that in the first phase of her education, before her marriage, her lessons on grammar and poetry had to be clandestine. Tornikes, our best source of information about her intellectual interests in retirement, reports that she gathered a circle of distinguished intellectuals around her and under their guidance explored the works of Aristotle, Plato, Euclid

[13] Choniates, ed. van Dieten, 10, tr. Magoulias, 8.

[14] *Al.*, V.ix.3, L, II, 38, S, 178-179.

[15] *Al.*, pr. i.2, L, I, 3, S, 17; cf. *Al.*, XV.vii.9, L, III, 218, S, 495-496.

and Ptolemy, carefully passing by such matters as fell under Christian censorship. She also studied rhetoric, history and, for light relief, poetry, tragedy and comedy.

In the end, however, she did not set about feasting on the fathers of the church in the manner of her mother, but turned her attention to the greatest of ancient philosophers. Tornikes leaves us in no doubt that her overriding interest was in philosophy. He tells us that she commissioned a series of written commentaries on the works of Aristotle from the philosophers in her circle. He credits her with rather more than commissioning and inspiring this work. He presents her as taking all too close an interest in the research and writing of her learned clients and as treating them in a rather domineering way. One of them, Michael of Ephesos, was kept at it deep into the night until his eyesight was permanently damaged.[16]

This strong intellectual bent, centering on philosophy but also embracing other subjects, notably medicine, immeasurably enlarged the sphere of Anna's interests. The quotidian frame of her outer life clearly played a minor role compared to what went on in the internal arena of her mind. Her intellectual enterprise, though it acquired in time a very clear focus, was not a narrow one. She had extensive knowledge of classical and late antique literature and was familiar with writings of the generation preceding her own, especially with those of Michael Psellos.[17] Above all else she prized intelligence and the literary skills required to articulate thought in writing—clarity of exposition, elegance of expression, persuasiveness and pleasure-giving ornamentation. These then are the concerns, intellectual and literary, which we would expect to find governing both the choice of much of the material included in her *Alexiad* and insinuating themselves into her own comments on the history which she was narrating.

Anna's own experience and intellectual interests have left their impress on the *Alexiad*. The fraught history of Byzantium which she retails revolves around the figure of her father. Despite her

[16] Tornikes, or. 14, ed. Darrouzès, 243-247, 281-283; cf. N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (London, 1983), 181-183.

[17] *Al.*, V.viii.3, L, II, 34, S, 175; St. Linnér, 'Psellus' *Chronographia* and the *Alexias*. Some textual parallels', *BZ*, 76 (1983), 1-9.

protestations to the contrary, there is a strong undertone of encomium, which reinforces the biographical element.[18] Alexios's rise to power is carefully charted, considerable space being given to the key role of the strong-willed women of the Komnenos-Doukas affinity in the final *putsch*. People whom Anna knew, her grandmother Anna Dalassene, to whom the civil government was delegated at the start of the reign, her mother the *augousta* Eirene, who comes increasingly to the fore towards the end, her husband Nikephoros Bryennios, and George Palaiologos, one of Alexios's most trusted generals, figure prominently in her account. There are also a number of scenes which have the immediacy of eyewitness experience and are suffused by the remembrance of the emotions of the time. Two stand out. In one, Michael Anemas and the other prime movers of a ramified conspiracy against the emperor are being paraded past a large crowd to the place of punishment where their eyes will be gouged out; the teenage Anna is among those looking on from the palace; she hears the mocking song which the lictors are chanting; she sees the crowns of animal entrails festooning the conspirators' heads, and then Anemas indicates by gesture that he would prefer death by mutilation to blinding; she pleads with her mother to intercede on behalf of the condemned men.[19] This is tame stuff, though, compared to the final chapter, with its long, graphic account of Alexios's last illness and death. This acquires extraordinary verisimilitude and grips hold of the reader through the incidental details which had etched themselves on Anna's memory—the disagreements among the doctors, the progress of the disease, which is minutely observed, the various vain efforts to give some physical relief to the dying emperor, the precise positions, actions and gestures of those there when the final crisis came.[20]

Constantinople takes its place beside the palace in the *Alexiad*. The scene involving Michael Anemas (which ends with his reprieve) is one of a small number which conjure up life in its streets and squares. In another we are suddenly transported from the

[18] J. N. Ljubarsky, *Anna Komnena, Alexiada* (Moscow, 1965), 31-32.

[19] *Al.*, XII.vi.5-9, L, III, 72-75, S, 384-386.

[20] *Al.*, XV.xi.1-20, L, III, 229-241, S, 505-513.

battlefields of north-western Asia Minor to the capital city in the company of Eustathios Kamytzes, who has managed to escape miraculously from Turkish captivity and has been sent back to announce the news of a Byzantine victory. After being ordered to get some rest by the *augousta*, he gets up at dawn, goes in his Turkish clothes to the forum of Constantine where a large, eager crowd rapidly gathers round him, and then gives a full account of the latest successes on the war front.[21] Anna also includes an elaborate set-piece about a large charitable complex, the *Orphanotropheion*, founded and generously endowed by Alexios, in the course of which she describes its architecture and recalls how those with different handicaps helped each other.[22] But the best of all these scenes is set in the hippodrome. Basil, the condemned Bogomil leader, has been brought out to face the huge pyre which will consume him unless he publicly abjures his dualist beliefs before a crowd which includes his own arrested followers. He declares that angels will rescue him at the last moment. When the crowd parts to let him see the flames leaping high, he swivels his eyes frequently, claps his hands, slaps his thigh. But he will not recant and stands immobile, gazing either at the fire or those standing nearby. The crowd is impressed and waits excitedly, until the executioners, themselves affected by a superstitious fear that there may be some demonic intervention, hurl first the heretic's cloak and then the heretic himself on the pyre, from which a single, thin line of smoke rises.[23]

Anna's personal contribution to the *Alexiad* was not limited to the clearly identifiable autoptic element. For her philosophical (and theological) concerns exercised a discernible influence over her choice of material. Famous trials and their antecedents involving an outspoken bishop (Leo, bishop of Chalcedon), a leading intellectual (John Italos), and a charismatic holy man who strayed into heresy (Neilos) are given full, though by no means fair coverage. Anna slips in her own comments, which are generally unfavourable, on the educational attainments and intellectual calibre of

[21] *Al.*, XIV.vi.5-6, L, III, 171-172, S, 457-458.
[22] *Al.*, XV.vii.4-9, L, III, 214-218, S, 492-495.
[23] *Al.*, XV.x.1-4, L, III, 226-228, S, 502-504.

the protagonists. Neilos's deviation into Monophysitism is blamed on his lack of a classical education and of a training in logic; it followed that he was not equipped to grasp the meaning of key Christological terms and that left his mind open to heresy. John Italos comes off much worse, since he is subjected to a torrent of invective. This psoggery includes, besides disparaging comments on his style, charges of arrogance, intellectual bullying, treasonable conduct and heretical beliefs.[24] On these and other occasions (for example when the astrologer Seth makes an appearance or Alexios enters into a disputation with the Paulicians of Philippopolis), Anna seizes the opportunity to sketch in something of the intellectual background to the issues of the day and includes some remarks about her own concerns.[25]

There is therefore the correlation between an author's life and work which we would expect of any contemporary historian but especially of one operating consciously in the classical tradition and stressing the importance of her own autoptic experience. This leaves the reader in no doubt that the *Alexiad* in its final form is Anna's work. This can be demonstrated unequivocally because she was not as reticent about herself as was traditionally expected of classicising historians (but then Psellos had recently set a very bad example). Corroboration, were it to be needed, would be to hand in the care which she took to improve the raw materials of history, upgrading the style and introducing all manner of learned allusions. The evidence of this literary upgrading is to found throughout the text.

Scope and balance of the *Alexiad*

So far so good. But there is one fundamental question to be asked of the *Alexiad*: what proportion of the text is occupied by material of this sort? Does it present history from the perspective of the palace and the capital, as is to be expected of Anna, given the circumstances of her life, especially since such an approach could easily

[24] *Al.*, V.ii, L, II, 10-13, S, 157-160; *Al.*, V.viii-ix, L, II, 32-40, S, 173-180; *Al.*, X.i.1-5, L, II, 187-189, S, 293-295.
[25] *Al.*, VI.vii.1-5, L, II, 57-59, S, 193-195; *Al.*, XIV.viii.3-9, L, III, 178-182, S, 463-467.

be justified on the basis of the recent precedent set by Psellos as well as the long-established practice of Byzantine historians, low-style as well as high-style? The answer is plain and disconcerting: the autoptic material, interpreted broadly to include information gathered at second hand from contemporaries at the time and long afterwards, and the vignettes of intellectual history form but a very small proportion of the *Alexiad;* and the main body of the text adopts a provincial and military standpoint diametrically opposed to the expected metropolitan one.

After the initial full account of Alexios's seizure of power and its background, when the spotlight is focused on the imperial family and its affinity and on its actions in and around the capital, the coverage of family history is intermittent and apparently arbitrary. Thus the later years of Anna Dalassene, including the circumstances of her retirement from the court are passed over in complete silence, as are the deaths between 1100 and 1107 of two pillars of the Komnenian regime, both brothers of the emperor, the *sebastokrator* Isaac and the grand domestic Adrian.[26] Births as well as deaths pass unrecorded. Of the numerous progeny of the emperor, note is only taken of the births of Anna, her oldest sister and her oldest brother, and the last's first two children (twins).[27]

Coverage of court history is almost as scanty, although Anna was well placed to introduce descriptions of great ceremonial occasions and use them as starting points for forays into domestic or foreign history. Apart from the celebrations marking her own birth (and those of her two oldest siblings) which she touches upon, she has virtually nothing to say about the annual round of ceremonies or about those laid on specially to honour visiting dignitaries. There is only one vignette of court life in the main body of the *Alexiad*, the description of the long sessions, sometimes stretching

[26] F. Chalandon, *Essai sur le règne d'Alexis Ier Comnène (1081-1118)* (Paris, 1900), 272-273; D. Papachryssanthou, 'La date de la mort du sébastocrator Isaac Comnène, frère d'Alexis I, et de quelques événements contemporains', *REB*, 21 (1963), 250-255; cf. Zonaras, XVIII.24, ed. Büttner-Wobst, 746. Anna merely refers incidentally to Anna Dalassene's death in her digression on astrologers (*Al.*, VI.vii.5, L, II, 59, S, 195).

[27] *Al.*, VI.viii, L, II, 60-63, S, 196-198; *Al.*, XII.iv.4, L, III, 66, S, 379-380. Contrast Zonaras, XVIII.22, ed. Büttner-Wobst, 738-740.

right through the night, in which Alexios patiently listened to the petitions of loquacious Latins and refrained from interrupting lest their quick tempers flared. This is the only passage which can stand comparison with Psellos's great set-piece descriptions of court life.[28]

Constantinople traditionally attracted disproportionate attention from historians. Cultivation by emperors of the jostling interest groups of their capital, whether senators, members of the more prestigious guilds, great monastic houses, talented apparatchiks in the secular or ecclesiastical administration, or the genuine poor, was not only essential if trouble was to be avoided in the palace and on the streets of the city, but was easy for historians resident in the city to observe and report. So too were other newsworthy items, such as unusual cases surfacing in the courts or prodigies or exceptionally bad weather. But, to the surprise of the reader, there is very little of this sort of material in the *Alexiad.* There are few references, and they are perfunctory, to the familiar and essential acts of patronage whereby an emperor sought to impress and please the people in Constantinople. Only one building project is mentioned, the *Orphanotropheion*, not a word being written about the construction of palaces by members of the imperial affinity nor about their endowment, restoration and decoration of churches and monasteries.[29] There is only a passing reference to the concern for justice which emperors were expected to show, in a single, uninformative sentence where Anna reports that Alexios took an interest in the courts during respites from war and domestic crises.[30] Equally little attention is given to the unusual events which

[28] *Al.*, XIV.iv.5-7, L, III, 161-163, S, 450-451. Otherwise the *Alexiad* only provides occasional glimpses of the court at Constantinople in the course of longer or shorter anecdotes: for example a dinner at *Al.*, II.iii.1-3, L, I, 69-70, S, 77-78, an audience where protocol is broken at *Al.*, X.x.6-7, L, II, 229-230, S, 325-326, and the arrival of a messenger as Alexios returns from hunting at *Al.*, XII.ix.7, L, III, 85, S, 394.

[29] *Al.*, XV.vii.4-9, L, III, 214-218, S, 492-495. Contrast Zonaras, XVIII.29, ed. Büttner-Wobst, 767 and Gautier, 'Typikon'. Cf. P. Magdalino, *The empire of Manuel Komnenos 1143-1180* (Cambridge, 1993), 114-116, and below Lyn Rodley, 339-358.

[30] *Al.*, XIV.vii.9, L, III, 176-177, S, 461-462.

formed the staple fare of Byzantine histories: one bad winter is reported (that of 1090/1 which saw heavy falls of snow), one natural disaster (a plague of locusts in 1096), three portents (a comet, the toppling in high winds of a statue of Constantine the Great from its column, and a worrying delay of four days in the regular weekly miracle performed by the Mother of God at her church in Blachernai).[31] Finally, the second great figure of the capital, the patriarch, has no more than a walk-on part. Nicholas III Grammatikos, who occupied the see for the greater part of Alexios's reign, from 1084 to 1111, is only mentioned incidentally on three occasions (two of them show-trials).[32] Anna records neither his appointment nor his death nor any of his acts, not even the general reform of the clergy introduced during his patriarchate.[33]

The *Alexiad* does not give a balanced history in which foreign relations are offset by domestic affairs, ranging from court and capital to remote provinces. The whole process of civil government, from the management of the empire's fiscal resources to the handling of political opposition, which might take several forms, is given relatively limited coverage. Administration is almost entirely neglected. Only one issue is dealt with properly—the fiscal crisis at the start of the reign and Alexios's controversial countermeasures.[34] Apart from the intellectual *causes célèbres*, most of what material there is has a distinctly provincial slant and concerns high politics. Thus, every effort is made to ensure the loyalty of a distant provincial magnate by detaining his son in Constantinople.

[31] *Al.*, VIII.iii.3, L, II, 134, S, 252; *Al.*, X.v.7, L, II, 208, S, 309; *Al.*, XII.iv.1-2, L, III, 64-65, S, 378-379; *Al.*, XII.iv.5, L, III, 66-67, S, 380; *Al.*, XIII.i.2, L, III, 87, S, 395.

[32] *Al.*, X.i.5, L, II, 188, S, 294; *Al.*, X.ii.5, L, II, 192, S, 297; *Al.*, XV.viii.6, L, III, 221, S, 498; *Al.*, XV.x.1, L, III, 226, S, 502.

[33] M. Angold, *The Byzantine empire 1025-1204. A political history* (London/New York, 1984), 120-123, Paul Magdalino, above, 199-218.

[34] Ljubarsky, *Anna Komnena*, 25; Chalandon, *Essai*, 277. For the financial crisis see *Al.*, V.ii, L, II, 10-13, S, 157-160, and *Al.*, VI.iii, L, II, 45-48, S, 184-186; otherwise Anna makes only fleeting references to such matters at *Al.*, III.viii.4, L, I, 126, S, 121 (appointments and petitions), *Al.*, XII.v.1-2, L, III, 67, S, 381 (titles and salaries), and *Al.*, XIV.vii.9, L, III, 176-177, S, 461-462 (justice). Contrast Zonaras, XVIII. 21, 22, 26, 29, ed. Büttner-Wobst, 732-733, 737-738, 753, 766-767.

Instant action is taken to defuse a crisis within the imperial affinity, when aspersions are cast on the allegiance of a nephew of Alexios, who had been put in charge of a remote province. Or, to cite the most sustained piece of domestic political history after the long account of the initial seizure of power, a dangerous nexus of dissident aristocrats and restive army officers is subjected to a carefully modulated counter-attack before it can solidify. This provincial, aristocratic focus is, of course, not that to be expected from Anna.[35]

Far more surprising, though, is the amount of space devoted to warfare. Enemy after enemy emerges from the surrounding world to launch attacks on the empire. Alexios is first and foremost a military emperor. Whenever possible, he takes direct command over his forces and leads them against the main enemy of the moment. He displays all the skills of scientific generalship developed over the centuries in Byzantium, as ready to resort to a strategy of patient, indirect approach as to one of bold, headlong confrontation in battle. He is portrayed both as a man of dash, of indomitable courage, and as the subtlest exponent of all the wiles and cunning devices which can shift the balance in a campaign. He is clever, intrepid and resilient in defeat.

The military narrative itself is very full. It takes up roughly half of Anna's text. The individual campaign narratives, which are the component parts of the *Alexiad*, provide detailed accounts of operations phase by phase. Movements, tactics, the names of senior commanders and key places are painstakingly recorded. The reader is taken into the nitty-gritty of warfare, given on occasion a graphic account of specific acts of heroism or of extraordinary adventures. Not that the overall strategic thrust of a campaign is lost sight of. On the contrary, most of her campaign narratives include short but illuminating passages of strategic appreciation, which provide a framework for understanding the individual operations described at such length.

War not only supplied the *Alexiad* with most of its material, but provided its basic structure. The individual campaign narratives

[35] *Al.*, VIII.ix, L, II, 151-155, S, 265-268; *Al.*, VIII.viii, L, II, 149-151, S, 263-265; *Al.*, IX.v-ix, L, II, 169-184, S, 277-289.

are grouped together to form theatre histories, and it is around these, arranged in rough chronological order, that the whole work is articulated. The struggle with the Normans for control of the western Balkans (1081-5) dominates books IV and V and is concluded in book VI. After an interlude referring (in rather confused fashion) to pulses of danger from the Turkish world, there comes a full account of the long war against the Pechenegs in the Balkans (1086-91) which begins in book VI and forms the principal theme of books VII-VIII. A notice, inserted at VII.viii about the appearance of a Turkish pirate fleet operating in the waters off western Asia Minor, is picked up and continued in the first half of book IX, to be followed in its turn by accounts of a Serb insurrection (IX.iv and x) and the massive but short-lived Cuman invasion of the Balkans (1095)—X.ii-iv. The dramatic story of the First Crusade (1097-9), first the approach of the various contingents, then their deft political handling by Alexios, finally the first stage of their advance into Anatolia fills the main body of book X and the first half of the next book, which then gives an extraordinarily muddled account of the subsequent history of the Crusaders and their relations with Byzantium (to 1105). The last two foreign policy preoccupations of Alexios, with Roger Guiscard's son Bohemond who invaded Dalmatia in autumn 1107 and with the Seljuks of Konya who launched major attacks in 1113 and 1116, dominate the scene in the final books.

This concentration on military history, and the intense concern shown for the operational particularities of campaigns seems rather odd, in the light of Anna's known interests which were literary and intellectual and her lack of experience of battles and war. It seems hard, if not impossible, to envisage her setting out to write a **military** history of her father's reign, let alone one which took the form of densely textured campaign narratives. If we knew nothing of the author, we would suppose that the *Alexiad* was penned by a retired officer whose active life had been spent in the field and whose later years were dominated by the memories and reminiscences of himself and his old comrades-in-arms. Or we might possibly imagine the author as a latterday Procopius, a trusted aide of a senior commander or of the emperor himself who kept a journal and later built up a history of Alexios's wars around

a core of material extracted from the journal. It almost beggars belief to conceive of Anna, with her devouring interest in philosophy and the philosophical underpinning of theological argument, devising, let alone realising a plan for a history of her father's reign which focuses so much on his wars.

It is not only Anna's choice of subject-matter which perplexes the reader. There is also the scale of her scholarly investment first in research, in amassing the raw materials for military history, and subsequently in the editorial work of sorting, combining and interpreting a multitude of discrete items of information. Whence came the impetus to undertake this back-breaking labour, which involved collecting the written memoirs of participants (about which Anna is rather condescending), questioning a number of elderly monks who had served in Alexios's armies, and then piecing together connected narratives out of this material and such memories as she retained of what she had heard in the palace between campaigns during Alexios's reign?[36] Yet more perplexing is Anna's ability to transform this material into history, to construct narratives that not only make sense but are illuminated by real understanding of tactics and strategy. Surely so sound a grasp of military matters was far out of the reach of an armchair historian with no experience of long route marches, of setting up and striking camps, of the hazards of campaigning in highland country, of the difficulties of co-ordinating operations however competent a general's senior commanders, or of the face of battle itself? Surely the lucid campaign histories of the *Alexiad* could not have been written without the insights which direct experience, autopsy, alone could afford? Surely the sound strategic sense which enabled the author to marshal a coherent narrative out of the inevitably divergent reports on individual operations given in the memoirs of different participants was acquired in the field by the holder of a senior command?

Arguments such as these drive us towards the inescapable conclusion that a second hand, that of a highly placed army officer, contributed to Anna's text. It is a conclusion which helps explain the striking disparity between the known experience and interests

[36] *Al.*, XIV.vii.4-7, L, III, 174-176, S, 459-461.

of Anna, which were metropolitan and intellectual, and the general perspective of the *Alexiad* which is provincial and military. The concern with high politics which has been noted likewise does not tally well with what is known of Anna, whose principal political initiative was extraordinarily ill-judged. The theme of the struggle of the Komnenian family and its affinity for supremacy against a number of dangerous magnate rivals and their affinities runs right through the *Alexiad*. But the story, even that of Alexios's rise to power in the opening two books, is not centred on Constantinople. The traditionally blinkered outlook of Byzantine historians and chroniclers is discarded. The foundations of magnate power are revealed to be lineage and military service, upon which could be built up an affinity of allied aristocratic houses and a network of military clients in the officer corps.[37] The struggle between the rival nexuses is played out in a variety of settings. Key episodes take place in Constantinople, but even more important are the scenes in which Alexios is out on campaign (before his accession) or (after it) on the road to war, his court reduced to its peripatetic military core. Anna, who had no direct experience of the political crises which came to a head outside the capital, did not have the inside knowledge needed for composing the flowing, entertaining and penetrating narratives of these crises. These too should be ascribed to the unidentified second hand, who can now be seen to be highly placed within the court.

Nikephoros Bryennios's contribution to the *Alexiad*

The second hand is not hard to identify, once the importance of its contribution to the *Alexiad* is appreciated. For Anna points us in the right direction where we would expect her to do so—in the preface to the *Alexiad*. She tells her readers that her late husband, Nikephoros Bryennios, was commissioned to write the history of Alexios's reign. The commission came from her mother, the *augousta* Eirene, and can be dated with confidence soon after Alexios's death. Nikephoros worked on it for the remainder of his life, in interludes between periods of active service as one of John II

[37] J.-C. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)* (ByzSorb, 9, Paris, 1990), 249-313.

Komnenos's trusted senior generals. He thus had some twenty years in which to carry out research, collate material and compose more or less polished drafts. His projected history may have been far from finished when he died, but the many years' of work invested in it (and Anna implies that it preoccupied him in his leisure hours) had assuredly generated a large volume of paperwork by 1138, when Anna acquired his literary effects.[38]

Anna's references to Nikephoros's work make it possible to be more precise about its character. She gives apparently conflicting definitions of its scope: first she describes the history which he had composed as extending from the accession of Romanos IV Diogenes (1068) to the reign of Nikephoros Botaneiates (1078-81);[39] then she refers to the composition which he brought back with him from his last campaign in Cilicia and northern Syria as one which he had sketched out and which was half-finished.[40] She seems to be making an implicit distinction between a complete or nearly complete section of his projected history which set the scene for the Komnenian *putsch* and a body of more or less extensive drafts dealing with Alexios's reign. The distinction is admittedly obscured by the wording. It can, however, be detected thanks to the survival, by the most tenuous of manuscript traditions, of Nikephoros's account of the prelude to Alexios's assumption of power, a work known as the *Hyle historias*, the *Material for a history*. This is a polished, carefully constructed history, full of insight about the politics and military affairs of the period, and enlivened by a number of long, entertaining anecdotes. By no stretch of the imagination, can it be described as sketched out or half-finished.[41] It follows therefore, unless Anna was seeking to disparage the work which inspired her to write history, that she inherited other material from Nikephoros, material which presumably dealt with Alexios's subsequent career and various aspects of his reign.

Anna, whose principal concern was with the literary finish of writings (as she makes plain in an aside about certain writings

[38] *Al.*, pr.iii.1-2, L, I, 5-6, S, 18-19.
[39] *Al.*, pr.iii.3, L, I, 6.3-9, S, 19-20.
[40] *Al.*, pr. iii.4, L, I, 6.15-16, S, 20.
[41] Ed. tr. Gautier, *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire.*

which had come into her hands[42]), evidently did not consider the material on the reign of Alexios which she received from Bryennios to constitute a coherent work of history. They formed, it may be conjectured, a large dossier of notes, some stored in files, others worked up into preliminary drafts, others transmuted into more or less polished prose. The material was, on this hypothesis, only half-digested and the story which it told episodic at best. Much remained to be done to turn it into connected, homogeneous, high-style classicising history. This was the task which Anna undertook, out of filial and uxorial devotion, a demanding task which involved supplementary research, a great deal of editorial work on the drafts, the insertion of infill material to plug some of the gaping holes in the dossier of drafts and notes, and a thorough-going literary upgrading of the whole.

This interpretation of Anna's remarks about Nikephoros's *Alexiad* not only accords better with the direct evidence about it (the part which survives) and with estimates of the progress which he is likely to have made. It also explains an otherwise puzzling omission from her account of the sources which she used. She puts the emphasis on her own experience and on information transmitted by word of mouth from high-ranking commanders at the time and long afterwards from old soldiers who had fallen on hard times and retired to monasteries. Documents are conspicuous for their absence in this list.[43] Yet they are far from inconspicuous in the text of the *Alexiad*.

Three documents are incorporated virtually in their entirety (only the preliminary and concluding formalities are left out): the Golden Bull of August 1081 delegating the management of domestic affairs to Alexios's mother, Anna Dalassene, during the period of Alexios's absence on campaign against the Normans in Dalmatia; an important letter addressed to Henry IV in the course of negotiations which took place in 1081; and the Treaty of Devol which was concluded with the beleaguered Bohemond at Dyrrhachium in 1108. Quotations are included from a number of others. A full and accurate summary is also given of the Golden Bull granting

[42] *Al.*, XIV.vii.7, L, III, 175-176, S, 461.
[43] *Al.*, XIV.vii.4-7, L, III, 174-176, S, 459-461.

commercial privileges to Venice.[44] These cases, where use of documents is incontrovertible thanks to their *verbatim* quotation or the survival of a later copy of the original text (in the case of the Venetian Golden Bull), inevitably prompt the question how extensive may have been the unobtrusive, unobserved contribution of official sources to the *Alexiad*.

Hazardous though it be to search for traces of lost sources in an extant text, the careful scrutiny of the *Alexiad* is particularly rewarding. For the final editing, by Anna, has not obscured the different viewpoints from which the military and diplomatic story is told. The sometimes arbitrary shifts between viewpoints which take place in the course of the narrative of a given episode are probably best explained as reflecting editorial transitions from source to source, each with its own particular perspective. In most cases, the viewpoints are those of different commanders in the field (for example, two are to the fore in the account of naval and military operations against Bohemond in 1107-8—Isaac Kontostephanos and Kantakouzenos[45]) or alternate between such commanders and the imperial authorities scanning the world around Constantinople (as in the case of the account of events in Outremer after the First Crusade[46]). Since the narrative is normally densely packed with the sort of detailed information which can only be conveyed in writing and since the material normally seems to have an official character, it can safely be inferred that prominent among the sources used for the military and diplomatic history in the *Alexiad* were those which were obviously useful for writers of contemporary history from the time of Julius Caesar to the present, namely state (and possibly private) papers. Adopting this as a working hypothesis, it is possible to identify a wide range of official sources underlying the *Alexiad*'s text, chiefly military

[44] *Al.*, III.vi.4-8, L, I, 120-122, S, 117-118 (chrysobull for Anna Dalassene); *Al.*, III.x.3-8, L, I, 133-136, S, 126-128 (letter to Henry IV); *Al.*, XIII.xii, L, III, 125-139, S, 424-434 (Treaty of Devol); *Al.*, VI.v.10, L, II, 54-55, S, 191 (chrysobull for Venice). Cf. Ja. N. Ljubarsky, 'Ob istochnikakh "Alexiady" Anny Komnenoy', *VizVrem*, 25 (1964), 99-120, 117-120.
[45] *Al.*, XII.viii-XIII.viii.5, L, III, 77-116, S, 388-417.
[46] *Al.*, XI.vii-xi, L, III, 32-49, S, 352-366.

dispatches, ambassadors' reports, official correspondence and position papers.

But Anna makes no mention of official written sources when she discusses her sources. Since there was no reason for her deliberately to suppress any reference to them and, as has been seen, no attempt is made to disguise the presence of documentary material in the text (some of it being quoted), there is only one possible explanation for her silence: **Anna did not carry out the extensive archival research which seems to have gone into the *Alexiad*; this work was done by Nikephoros and was one of his main contributions**. Anna was scrupulous in not claiming credit for work which she had not done. Instead she indicates indirectly but clearly, by acknowledging her debt to her husband, that he was the conduit through which a mass of documentary material passed on its way into the final text.[47]

Nikephoros had all the autoptic experience so evident behind the military and political history retailed in the *Alexiad*, for which we have looked in vain in Anna. He was active in the field from an early age. He held senior commands, conducted delicate negotiations with a dangerous foreign power, and was, *qua* inner member of the imperial affinity, privy to political machinations wherever they occurred. His career can be shown not only to have generated the interest and aptitude for writing military (and political) history characteristic of the second hand at work on the *Alexiad*, but also to have influenced the balance of its coverage. The Bryennioi were a Thracian family, whose local power-base was Adrianople and its rural hinterland.[48] Only a sketchy account can be given of Nikephoros's activities in Alexios's reign: he is first glimpsed on the walls of Constantinople in 1097 at a time when it was feared the Crusaders might launch an attack; he took part in the 1107-08 campaign against Bohemond in Epiros and played a vital part in persuading him to sign the Treaty of Devol; he was

[47] This is perhaps the meaning which should be imputed to Anna's obscure references to the 'various ways' (ποικίλως) in which she learned about the war experiences of those who campaigned with Alexios and to 'certain channels' (διά τινων πορθμέων) which communicated them to her—*Al.*, XIV.vii.5, L, III, 175.3-4, S, 460.

[48] Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 220.

with Alexios in 1114 and 1115, when disputations were held with the Paulicians of Philippopolis; finally, he was a senior general (in command of the right wing) on the 1116 campaign against the Turks of Iconium.[49]

His Balkan family connections and his service in the field provide the readiest explanations both for the marked western orientation of the *Alexiad* and for the sudden improvement in the quality of the generally confused account of warfare in Asia Minor which occurs towards the end. For it would have been quite natural for Nikephoros to start work on his projected history by turning to the region which he knew best (the Balkans, the history of which looms largest in the text) and to episodes of which he had direct, personal knowledge (the First Crusade, the 1107-08 campaign against Bohemond, and the last two major campaigns against the Turks in 1113 and 1116).

Inevitably his own direct experience would have been limited, especially when the action, whether military or diplomatic, took place at different places at the same time (as, for example, in the cases, cited above, of operations against Dyrrachium in 1107-8 or Byzantine dealings with Outremer immediately after the First Crusade). But personal involvement would have supplied him with that most precious of commodities for a historian—inside knowledge, both an awareness of what was going on behind the scenes (and, on occasion, below the surface of official records) and a sound appreciation of the relative importance of key players in events. He would thereby have acquired the ability to make discriminating and efficient use of available evidence. For he would have been in a postion to know whose dispatches and reports would be most informative and trustworthy and to whom to turn among his contemporaries and those of the preceding generation for further oral information.

Thus autopsy gave Nikephoros the initial impetus to start work on those episodes in which he had been personally involved and helped his research by guiding him to the key sources, mainly

[49] *Al.*, X.ix.6, L, II, 223, S, 320-321; *Al.*, XIII.xi.2, L, III, 124-125, S, 423-424; *Al.*, XIV.viii.9, L, III, 182, S, 466; *Al.*, XV.iv.8, L, III, 202, S, 483; *Al.*, XV.v.3, L, III, 205, S, 485. Cf. Gautier, *Bryennios*, 24-26.

documentary, upon which reliable history could be founded. It was also likely to sustain the momentum of his research and writing and carry the work on to the stage of more or less advanced drafts, since the interest and understanding needed to write up coherent theatre histories was immediately to hand in his own memories. An explanation is thereby obtained for the generally high quality of the military narrative dealing with the campaigns on which Bryennios served. Anna probably found connected, more or less polished drafts dealing with them in the dossier which she inherited, and was able to include them, with relatively little restyling, in her *Alexiad*. The rather poorer quality of other sections of the military history would, on this hypothesis, be attributable to the difficulties which she encountered in working with rawer materials (Nikephoros having been slower to process material on subjects for which he was less well equipped, for lack of first-hand knowledge) dealing with what was for Anna unfamiliar and uncongenial subject-matter.

Finally, if further evidence is sought for the proposition that Nikephoros was the original progenitor of much of the material in the *Alexiad*, it can be found in a particular type of well-told, entertaining anecdote which lards the text and which can be parallelled in his own nearly finished *Material for a history*. There are twenty-five of them all told.[50] They display basic narrative gifts of a very

[50] They are as follows: 1. Alexios pretends to blind Roussel, is reproached by Dokeianos and reveals the truth (*Al.*, I.iii.1-4, L, I, 14-16, S, 36-37); 2. Basilakios is lured into Alexios's camp at night (*Al.*, I.vii.5-viii.2, L, I, 30-32, S, 48-49); 3. Robert Guiscard captures William Mascabel (*Al.*, I.xi, L, I, 38-42, S, 54-57); 4. Isaac and Alexios gain the confidence of the *augousta* Maria of Alania (*Al.*, II.ii.2-3, L, I, 66-68, S, 75-77); 5. Isaac and Alexios attend on the emperor as he dines, fearful that a plot is being hatched against them (*Al.*, II.iii.1-3, L, I, 69-70, S, 77-78); 6. The Komnenian clan slips out of the palace, Anna Dalassene demands a sworn guarantee of safety (*Al.*, II.v, L, I, 75-79, S, 83-86); 7. Caesar John Doukas joins the rebellion (*Al.*, II.vi.4-7, L, I, 81-83, S, 87-89); 8. The ingenious excuses of George Manganes for his failure to draft a promised golden bull in favour of Nikephoros Melissenos (speech has been reduced to *oratio obliqua*) (*Al.*, II.viii.4, L, I, 89-90, S, 93-94; *Al.*, II.x.1, L, I, 92-93, S, 96); 9. George Palaiologos wins over the fleet and meets his father (*Al.*, II.xi, L, I, 95-98, S, 98-100); 10. Foreknowledge of an eclipse is put to good use in negotiations with the Pechenegs (*Al.*, VII.ii.8-9, L, II, 92-93, S, 221); 11. George

high order. They are written in a simple flowing style. The principal interest is psychological, in individuals, their characters and their shifting moods. They are filled with detailed observations of persons, actions, gestures, and postures, of times and weather and places. They are usually enlivened by snatches of direct speech which provide further insight into the characters of the participants. It is as if we have been whisked suddenly away from high-style history-writing to pre-Metaphrastian hagiographical texts, away from refined literary circles in the metropolis to provincial monastic houses, away from the deadening influence of a classicising mandarin culture to living contemporary story-telling. These stories have been distilled from life without losing freshness or verve by a story-teller with extraordinary powers.

The simple, direct narrative style of these stories, the artful apparent artlessness of this high-grade anecdotal matter which covers affairs in both war and peace, both at home and abroad, succeeds in varying the tone and pace of the work and in entertaining

Palaiologos's escape after the rout of the Byzantine army near Dristra (*Al.*, VII.iv.1-3, L, II, 101-103, S, 227-228); 12. A crisis in the Komnenian family (*Al.*, VIII.viii, L, II, 149-151, S, 263-265); 13. Theodore Gabras's attempt to spirit his son Gregory out of Constantinople is foiled, as is Gregory's later attempt to escape (*Al.*, VIII.ix, L, II, 151-155, S, 265-268); 14. The conspiracy of Nikephoros Diogenes (*Al.*, IX.v-ix, L, II, 169-184, S, 277-289); 15. The false Leo Diogenes is lured into a trap (*Al.*, X.iv.1-5, L, II, 198-201, S, 302-304); 16. The heroism of Marianos Maurokatakalon and a Latin warrior priest in a naval engagement which begins on a moonlit, windless winter's night in the Adriatic (*Al.*, X.viii.2-10, L, II, 215-220, S, 315-318); 17. Protocol is violated by a proud Crusader (*Al.*, X.x.6-7, L, II, 229-230, S, 325-326); 18. Alexios courts Bohemond (*Al.*, X.xi.1-6, L, II, 230-233, S, 326-329); 19. Rodomir and Monastras dissuade their Turkish prisoners from attacking them (*Al.*, XI.ii.7-10, L, III, 13-16, S, 338-340); 20. Tancred's reluctance to swear fealty to the emperor (*Al.*, XI.iii.1-2, L, III, 16-17, S, 340-341); 21. Bohemond feigns death and travels west in a coffin (*Al.*, XI.xii, L, III, 50-52, S, 366-368); 22. Aaron's plot to assassinate Alexios (*Al.*, XIII.i.5-10, L, III, 88-91, S, 396-398); 23. Kamytzes fights gallantly against the Turks, is captured, escapes and brings news of the emperor's victory to Constantinople (*Al.*, XIV.v.4-6, L, III, 166-168, S, 453-455; *Al.*, XIV.vi.3-6, L, III, 170-172, S, 456-458); 24. A headstrong young sultan ignores advice and pays a heavy price (*Al.*, XV.v.3-vi.10, L, III, 205-213, S, 485-491); 25. Arrest, interrogation and burning of Basil the Bogomil leader (*Al.*, XV.viii.1-x.4, L, III, 218-228, S, 496-504).

the reader. They are seldom encumbered with learned allusions or larded with classical tags. Similes are occasional and apt (for example the likening of Bohemond, who finally yields to temptation and accepts the pile of treasure, cloth and other objects which Alexios has left for him after two changes of mind, to an octopus which frequently changes colour[51]). Next to the high-grade campaign narratives which form the solid core of the text, it is these stories which raise the *Alexiad*, for all its muddles and gaps, to the level of the very best historical works produced in Christendom or indeed in the Islamic lands in the middle ages.

Unequivocal evidence is provided by the *Material for a history* that anecdotes of this sort were a key characteristic of Nikephoros's historical writing.[52] They are told in the same manner and feature several of the *Alexiad*'s protagonists (Anna Dalassene, caesar John Doukas, George Palaiologos and Alexios). It can also be demonstrated that, for all her devotion to Nikephoros, Anna

[51] *Al.*, X.xi.6, L, II, 233.19-23, S, 328.

[52] Inventory of eleven anecdotes from Bryennios's *Material for a history*: 1. John Komnenos refuses his brother Isaac's offer of the throne much to his wife's dismay (I.4-5, ed. Gautier, 80-83); 2. Anna Dalassene buries one son (Manuel) and tries to send another (the young Alexios) to war (I.12, ed. Gautier, 102-105); 3. Anna Dalassene shakes the court convened to try her on a trumped up charge (I.22, ed. Gautier, 128-131); 4. Deserted by his men after a Byzantine defeat, Alexios flees to Gabadonia, where he is hospitably received (II.6-7, ed. Gautier, 150-155); 5. Alexios and his brother Isaac are surrounded by Turkish raiders in the house where they are being entertained, Alexios inspires the company to fight their way out (II.9-13, ed. Gautier, 156-167); 6. The tutors of two small grandsons of caesar John Doukas plan to escape at night from the castle where they are being held prisoner, the alarm is raised and only one tutor escapes with his charge (no direct speech) (II.16, ed. Gautier, 172-175); 7. Alexios pretends to blind Roussel, is reproached by Theodore Dokeianos and reveals the truth (II.24-25, ed. Gautier, 192-197); 8. Isaac Komnenos feigns illness so as to draw Aimylianos patriarch of Antioch out of the city (only *oratio obliqua*) (II.28, ed. Gautier, 202-205); 9. Caesar John Doukas indicates that a new priest must be found to marry Nikephoros Botaneiates to Maria of Alania (no direct speech) (III.25, ed. Gautier, 252-255); 10. Basilakes is lured into Alexios's camp at night (IV.20-23, ed. Gautier, 287-291); 11. The eunuch John is mocked by his troops, he ignores George Palaiologos's advice and attacks Nikaia, his life is saved by George as is that of Isaac Kontostephanos, on reaching safety, he turns on George (IV.32-40, ed. Gautier, 300-311).

was not influenced by this narrative manner of his, that her literary temperament was not attuned to this sort of material.

One of the first of the anecdotes to appear in the *Alexiad* concerns Alexios's treatment of the Frankish *condottiere* Roussel whose capture he had engineered. Alexios pretended to have him blinded (to weaken the attachment of the people of Amaseia to him), but later, when berated by one Theodore Dokeianos for doing this, he had Roussel uncover his face, at which Theodore was overjoyed and embraced Alexios. It is by no means the best of the anecdotes which have lodged in the *Alexiad*, but it has a special interest since it is Anna's version of a story which survives in its original form in Nikephoros's *Material for a history*. Anna's treatment of such anecdotal matter can therefore be observed at first hand. She compresses the original (mainly by cutting out much of the military matter about Alexios which provides its setting). She also squeezes out much of its vitality. The graphic details given by Nikephoros (in the case of the staged blinding, short, staccato sentences increase the tension) are lost, replaced by learned allusions, similes and a ponderous turn on Theodore's puzzlement. The direct speech is reduced to a single phrase.[53]

Signs of similar editorial intervention can be detected in many of the anecdotes in the *Alexiad*, which deal with incidents falling outside the scope of the *Material for a history*. A certain amount of pruning may be suspected. This would account for the apparently arbitrary breaks in some anecdotes, where the narrative appears to leap-frog ahead, passing over one or more incidents from a connected series. The story of George Palaiologos's escape after the rout of the Byzantine field army near Dristra in 1087 may be taken as an example. A tantalising reference to the eleven days which he spent trying to find his way across unfamiliar countryside leaves the reader speculating about the adventures which he may have had before the encounter with a widow with which this phase of the story ends. There is also a hint that something else transpired, since he spent several days with the widow.[54] Again the reader reaches out for more information than the anecdote supplies in its

[53] Bryennios, II. 24-25, ed. Gautier, 192-197; *Al.*, I.iii.1-4, L, I, 14-16, S, 36-37.

[54] *Al.*, VII.iv.3, L, II, 103.6-9, S, 228.

extant form, and suspects that the anecdote was once rather longer and contained a fair amount of indelicate matter, which Anna preferred to excise. Anna's general concern, it may be inferred, was to keep the longer anecdotes within reasonable bounds, although she was not averse from filling out some of them with explanatory passages of her own composition or adding occasional learned touches.

There can be little doubt that twenty-five fully-developed anecdotes which are to be found in the *Alexiad* were the work of Nikephoros. The kernels of eight others also appear to lurk in the text. Their brevity can be explained in one of two ways: they may not have been worked up by Bryennios or they may have been condensed by Anna.[55] Since Anna had no special aptitude for this genre of writing, the anecdotes, both fully-developed and compressed, can be used as trace elements, indicating the presence in the text of material written by Nikephoros. They are dispersed throughout the text, with the exception of one large bloc (books III-V). The first, the story of Alexios, Roussel and Dokeianos occurs early in book I (at ch.iii), while the last four are the chief components of one of the *tours de force* in the *Alexiad*, the story of the apprehending, interrogation and eventual execution of Basil the Bogomil (XV.viii-x). The *dramatis personae* are variegated. The most impressive perhaps is the decisive and imperious Anna Dalassene who helps the Komnenian conspirators slip out of the city and then demands as publicly as possible a sworn guarantee that all their womenfolk will be safe from reprisals. (It begins with an account of their stealthy departure from the palace in the middle of

[55] Inventory of eight compressed anecdotes in the *Alexiad*: 1. Caesar John Doukas inspects the defences of Constantinople (*Al.*, II.ix.3, L, I, 91, S, 95); 2. Abul-Kasim is entertained in Constantinople (*Al.*, VI.x.9-10, L, II, 71, S, 203-204); 3. Tzachas is plied with wine and killed (*Al.*, IX.iii.4, L, II, 166, S, 275); 4. Assassination of Kaspax in Smyrna (*Al.*, XI.v.4, L, III, 25-26, S, 347); 5. Successful stratagem of Saint-Gilles against the emir of Damascus at Antarados (*Al.*, XI.vii.4-5, L, III, 34-35, S, 353-354); 6. Alexios's sang-froid on receiving the news that Bohemond has landed in Dalmatia (*Al.*, XII.ix.7, L, III, 84-85, S, 394); 7. Kantakouzenos's men turn tail (*Al.*, XIII.v.4-6, L, III, 105-107, S, 409-410); 8. Alexios's sang-froid at the news that the Turks are nearby, the *augousta* is sent back reluctantly to Constantinople (*Al.*, XV.ii.1-2, L, III, 190-191, S, 473-474).

the night, in the course of which they close the double doors of the separate apartment where a young relative of the emperor and his tutor are sleeping, taking care not to shut them completely lest that make a noise.)[56] The other leading players are, with a single exception, all men. They include several foreigners, notably Bohemond and three important Turkish leaders, as well as a wide range of Byzantine magnates and military commanders.

They occur in many different contexts, in campaign narratives recounting the wars against Pechenegs and Cumans in the Balkans, in the account of the First Crusade, and in the history of diplomacy and warfare against the Turks. Lengthy, well-crafted anecdotes also occur in non-military and non-diplomatic contexts. They are the chief vehicles for conveying domestic political history to the reader after the seizure of power by the Komnenian-Doukas affinity, as well as for imparting colour and vitality to the full narrative of their *putsch*. Through these anecdotes the power structure of Komnenian Byzantium and the manoeuvrings of the great aristocratic houses and bureaucratic interests in opposition to the regime are discreetly and vividly portrayed. Their subjects include all the great political crises of Alexios's reign as well as the purge of Bogomils in Constantinople.

The distribution of these anecdotes through most of the text provides strong corroboration for the conclusion already reached on the basis of the preponderance of military and provincial matter in the *Alexiad*, the remarks made by Anna in her preface about Nikephoros's work, and the western skewing of its coverage—namely that Nikephoros Bryennios was responsible for the main body of the *Alexiad*. They confirm the massive scale of his contribution and provide solid evidence that his range extended far beyond the military sphere. Whole sections of the text which it would be natural, on the basis of their subject-matter, to associate with Anna (and which have been so associated hitherto in this paper) can be shown now to be mainly the work of Nikephoros.

The long account of the *putsch* with which the story of the Komnenian-Doukas rise to power ends can be attributed with confidence to Nikephoros, because several anecdotes of his are inte-

[56] *Al.*, II.v.2, L, I, 75-76, S, 83.

gral parts of the narrative, the most notable being that about Anna Dalassene (referred to above) and that describing how caesar John Doukas received the news and journeyed to join Alexios. It can be confirmed that Nikephoros was responsible for the shorter and longer vignettes of domestic politics in Alexios's reign, since, apart from the provincial slant which points to his authorship, they take the form of extended anecdotes. The longest of these, about the unravelling of Nikephoros Diogenes's conspiracy, is one of the *tours de force* of the *Alexiad*: the early scenes in which circumstances thwart two assassination attempts reveal Nikephoros's telling eye for detail; the final one in which Alexios lays on a grand court reception to browbeat those implicated in the plot into submission is one of the most memorable in any Byzantine historical text.[57] Finally, two episodes, the return of Eustathios Kamytzes from the war in Asia Minor and the interrogation and burning of Basil the Bogomil, which have been ascribed provisionally to Anna because of their metropolitan setting, must now be re-assigned to Nikephoros because of the narrative mode adopted.

The presence of anecdotal matter can serve a second diagnostic purpose, if, as seems likely, it was introduced at a relatively advanced stage in the drafting process, when literary concerns were coming to the fore in Nikephoros's mind. As well as acting as markers for specific contributions of his, anecdotes probably indicate that the sections in which they are embedded, had been given literary polish by Nikephoros and hence that Anna had taken over drafts which were approaching completion. On this hypothesis, the anecdotes can take us behind the text of the *Alexiad* as we have it, and allow us to watch Nikephoros at work. For the absence or presence of anecdotal matter makes it possible to distinguish between first and second (nearly final) drafts of Nikephoros, on rather more tangible evidence than subjective judgements about relative tautness or looseness in the narrative substance of different sections of the *Alexiad*.

[57] *Al.*, IX.v.3, L, II, 170, S, 278-279; *Al.*, IX.v.5, L, II, 171, S, 279; *Al.*, IX.ix, L, II, 180-183, S, 286-289.

The formation of the *Alexiad*

The unfinished condition of Nikephoros's *Alexiad* posed enormous problems for Anna. Her literary and intellectual inclinations led in quite other directions. The sheer mass of the material which she inherited must have been daunting. But she seems to have set to work with a will, pulling into literary shape and filling out Nikephoros's dossier of work in progress. Only once does she let slip that she found the task uncongenial. She was working one evening on a complex section describing the operations, conducted by four land and three naval commanders, against Bohemond at Dyrrachium in 1108. She was feeling drowsy, she tells us, and frustrated at the need to introduce barbarian names and to describe a rush of events. This would, she feared, disrupt the main flow of the narrative.[58]

Nonetheless, Anna stuck to the task for the rest of her life. For fifteen years after Nikephoros died she continued to revise and improve Nikephoros's *Alexiad*. She had almost finished at the time of her death—there are only a handful of blanks which she had not filled in, presumably because she did not know them off-hand.[59] But she had not succeeded in transforming the revised version into a seamless, homogeneous whole. It is not difficult to distinguish the main component parts of the *Alexiad*, since, even in its final form, their contours can be seen.

There is indeed something ramshackle about the *Alexiad*. Several odd juxtapositions of material and a number of abrupt transitions from one type of subject-matter to another (of which more will be said below) have the effect of scrambling the chronology of events. The coverage too is not as extensive as it should be, and some of the detailed narrative—notably the account of Turkish affairs before 1113—is very confused and confusing. There are therefore many signs that the *Alexiad* is not a carefully structured, let alone a cunningly slanted work of history, but rather a patchwork

[58] Al., XIII.v-vii, L, III, 104-114, S, 408-415 (operations); Al., XIII.vi.3, L, III, 109, S, 411-412 (Anna's interjection).

[59] They concern dates, places and individuals. Some are rather surprising: the date of the Pilgrims' Crusade (*Al.*, X.v.4, L, II, 206, S, 308); the names of two of the four Anemas brothers (*Al.*, XII.v.4, L, III, 69, S, 382); the date of the purge of the Constantinopolitan Bogomils (*Al.*, XV.viii.1, L, III, 218, S, 496).

of materials assembled and drafted by Nikephoros which Anna has done her best to put into order and, by judicious additions of her own, to transform into a connected history. The very modesty of her aims—itself powerful testimony to her respect for Nikephoros's work—has allowed the text to retain extraordinary historiographical value, since it provides a unique opportunity to watch a Byzantine historian at work.

Nikephoros can be shown to have supplemented the inevitably meagre factual information which he could draw from his own experience (itself liable to corruption through the subtle, unconscious workings of memory) by turning to written sources, most of them probably documentary in character and to be found in state and private archives. Written materials, produced by commanders in the field or senior officials in Constantinople, with the aid of their subordinate staffs, were the most useful sources from which to form the military and diplomatic core of his history. Careful scrutiny of the *Alexiad* reveals the various stages through which this mainly archival material passed, as the historian worked it up into history.

No great surprises are in store for the latterday historian who looks over Anna's shoulder at Nikephoros as he gathers, stores, digests and writes up his material. First he had to decide which sources were reliable and informative enough to act as the bases for his account of Alexios's reign. Then he had to ingest material from each of these principal sources in turn, taking full notes of such passages as he judged to be of exceptional importance. The only detectable examples of this first stage of note-taking occur in the account of Robert Guiscard's attack on Dalmatia in 1081 and of his return with substantial reinforcements in autumn 1084. So close are the parallels of substance, of arrangement and of phrasing between a number of passages in the *Alexiad* and the corresponding parts of books IV and V of the *Gesta Roberti Wiscardi* of William of Apulia that it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the main contributor of military material to the *Alexiad*, Nikephoros, was using the *Gesta* and attending closely to what it said. Some of this material was combined with information from Byzantine sources and worked up into a connected draft about the initial operations in summer 1081 (and their background), to judge by the

smooth and apparently reliable narrative presented by the *Alexiad*. Other material, though, dealing with the events of late 1084 and the following winter, seems to have reached an editor less *au fait* with military and diplomatic affairs (Anna) in the form of full notes on the *Gesta*. Lacking a clear indication of context, some of these notes were wrongly taken to refer to the earlier expedition, and were then inserted into the connected draft about it which Nikephoros had composed.[60]

Raw notes on a particular source were, as has already been seen in the case of some of Robert Guiscard's activities in 1081, worked up into connected prose, with or without subsidiary contributions from other sources, to give a preliminary account of a topic. The natural course of action for the historian to take at this second stage of preliminary digestion of primary material was to gather it together topic by topic in separate files, each file being related to a particular issue or containing material extracted from a single set of sources. A hypothesis of this sort is more than an *a priori* assumption to account for the final form and the pattern of the contents of the *Alexiad*. For it provides the readiest explanation for the veritable chaos of chronological confusion evident in the *Alexiad*'s account of events in Outremer after the capture of Jerusalem by the First Crusade down to the death of Raymond of Saint-Gilles, count of Toulouse, in February 1105. The reader who advances chapter by chapter through the second half of book XI is jerked backwards or forwards through time without rhyme or reason. These abrupt transitions can only be explained, by the supposition that this section of the *Alexiad* consists of a succession of discretely filed material on separate matters, and that the later editorial hand has been unable either to re-arrange the separate files in a better

[60] *Contra* Ljubarsky, 'Ob istochnikak', 110-117, who argues that William and Anna drew on a lost common source, and G.A. Loud, 'Anna Komnena and her sources for the Normans of southern Italy', *Church and chronicle in the middle ages. Essays presented to John Taylor*, ed. I. Wood and G.A. Loud (London, 1991), 41-57, who concludes that the two accounts are entirely independent of each other. The evidence, convergence of substance and arrangement as well as a number of parallel passages, is presented in full by Loud. Proof of my contention will take many pages and will require a separate paper.

order or to combine them to form a more coherent narrative. Most of the files can plausibly be related to a particular archive, containing the dispatches or reports of a Byzantine general, admiral or liaison officer who had an important role in the episode or episodes covered and whose name recurs on several occasions in the chapter or part-chapter in question.[61]

But much of the material which Anna received from Nikephoros had progressed beyond this stage of preliminary digestion and took the form of connected drafts. The main components, military and political, of the *Alexiad* which have been attributed to

[61] Chalandon, *Essai*, xvii-xviii. R.-J. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader states 1096-1204* (Oxford, 1993), 259-276, strives valiantly to find other explanations for the disorder of the *Alexiad*'s account. A provisional breakdown of the material in *Al.*, XI.vii-xi, L, III, 32-49, S, 352-366, by conjectured file is offered here: 1. Battle of Ramleh (1102) and subsequent ransoming of the Latin prisoners by Alexios—based on a Byzantine communiqué and other documents in the Dromos archives. (*Al.*, XI.vii.1-3, L, III, 32-34, S, 352-353) (cf. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader states*, 261, 263, who notes that the king of Jerusalem is wrongly identified as Godfrey); 2. The career of Raymond of Saint-Gilles from 1100 to his death in 1105, covering his visit to Constantinople, his appointment as liaison officer to the Second Crusade, his cession of Laodikeia and his siege of Tripoli—based on letters and reports about him (*Al.*, XI.vii.4-viii.5, L, III, 34-39, S, 353-357) (cf. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader states*, 265-274); 3. Exchange of letters between Alexios and Bohemond in 1103 or 1104—based on the letters themselves (*Al.*, XI.ix.1, L, III, 39-40, S, 357-358) (cf. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader states*, 275); 4. Byzantine expedition to Cilicia in 1104, attention being focused on tension in the high command—based on correspondence with the commander-in-chief Boutoumites and others (*Al.*, XI.ix.2-4, L, III, 40-41, S, 358-360) (cf. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader states*, 276); 5. Naval warfare against the Pisan fleet in 1099 (a victory is won, a peace feeler is rejected by Bohemond, the Byzantine fleet is damaged in a storm)—based on the reports of Landulph and Tatikios (*Al.*, XI.x.1-8, L, III, 41-45, S, 360-363) (cf. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader states*, 262-263, 274); 6. Occupation of Cilicia by admiral Eustathios—based on his report (*Al.*, XI.x.9-10, L, III, 45-46, S, 363-364) (dated to the end of 1099 or the first half of 1100 by Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader states*, 275); 7. Kantakouzenos fails to intercept a Genoese fleet in 1104, then captures the lower city of Laodikeia and besieges the Latins in the citadel—based on Kantakouzenos's dispatches (*Al.*, XI.xi, L, III, 46-49, S, 364-366) (cf. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader states*, 262-265, who notes that the Genoese naval expeditions of 1100 and 1104 are conflated, the actions recorded being those of the 1104 fleet but the apparent date 1100).

Nikephoros, from the opening account of the Komnenos-Doukas *putsch* through to the 1116 campaign against the Turks, present well-ordered narratives. It is plain that they have been shaped by an author (Nikephoros) who combined plenty of detailed knowledge with a good understanding of high politics, diplomacy, strategy and tactics, before they came into Anna's hands. The chief exception is the material on Byzantine relations with the Turks, where there is much evidence of scrambling. This suggests, as in the case of the history of Outremer 1099-1105, that Anna had to cope with half-digested material, although it is much harder to trace what has gone wrong since the sources for Turkish history in this period cannot match those about Outremer in range or detail.

A careful sifting of all the military and political material attributable to Nikephoros would doubtless reveal many stages in the drafting process. But it is not difficult, even on a preliminary survey, to distinguish between early and late drafts, the main criteria for the latter being a larger infusion of political/strategic interpretation, the presence of more background matter and the invigoration of the narrative through the introduction of anecdotes in Nikephoros's characteristic style. Early drafts might be loosely constructed and over-long, an example being the account of the operations against Bohemond in 1107-8, which prompted Anna's one exclamation about the difficulty of her editorial task.[62] Equally they might be tightly-worked, terse accounts of operations (as, for example, in the case of Bohemond's advance east into the central Balkans in 1082 and Alexios's initial counter-moves), which would need to be opened out, allowing more narrative detail into the descriptions of certain episodes, if they were properly to engage the attention of the reader.[63]

Later drafts struck a balance between richness of narrative detail and attention to the main contingent and causal thrust shaping history episode by episode, and show many signs of literary burnishing. They are to be found dispersed in many different contexts, from the well-articulated narrative of Alexios's seizure of

[62] *Al.*, XIII.ii.1-viii.5, L, III, 91-116, S, 398-417 (*Al.*, XIII.vi.3, L, III, 109, S, 411-412).

[63] *Al.*, V.v.1-3, L, II, 22-24, S, 166-168.

power to the extraordinarily evocative description of the death of Basil the Bogomil in the hippodrome.[64] The important episodes covered by late drafts include two Balkan campaigns (those of 1087 and 1091), the dissolution of Nikephoros Diogenes's dangerous coalition (1094), the negotiations with Bohemond which led to the signing of the Treaty of Devol (1108), and the 1116 campaign against the sultan of Iconium.[65] To this category of late drafts should also be assigned the account of the First Crusade from the appearance on Byzantine territory of Peter the Hermit and his mass of followers up to the moment when the team of Byzantine advisers left the Crusaders in the middle of the siege of Antioch. For it is not only well articulated and larded with entertaining, lifelike anecdotes, but has also been carefully laundered—assuredly by someone privy to the most secret dealings of Alexios with the Crusaders—to conceal the fact that initially Bohemond was highly regarded by Alexios and that, although he did not succeed in being designated leader of the Crusade, he became for a while Byzantium's chief client among the leaders of the Crusade.[66]

Anna inherited a mass of material at various stages of organisation and drafting from Nikephoros. Much remained to be done to transform it into a work of history. The drafts, filed materials and notes had to be arranged in an order which made historical sense—no easy task for an editor who, like Anna, did not have that deep engagement with a receding past which personal experience can best impart. Her main organising principle seems to have been chronological, and she was on the whole successful in arranging the theatre narratives in the correct order (the exception being Turkish history before 1113, which she evidently found quite bewildering). She encountered greater difficulty when it came to placing smaller items of information, either extracted from files or already worked up into short, disconnected drafts, within

[64] *Al.*, II, L, I, 63-101, S, 73-102; *Al.*, XV.viii-x.4, L, III, 218-228, S, 396-504.

[65] *Al.*, VII.iii-iv, L, II, 93-103, S, 221-228; *Al.*, VIII.iv-vi, L, II, 135-146, S, 253-263; *Al.*, IX.v-ix, L, II, 169-184, S, 278-289; *Al.*, XIII.viii.6-xi.2, L, III, 116-125, S, 417-424; *Al.*, XV.iv-vi, L, III, 199-213, S, 480-491.

[66] *Al.*, X.v.4-XI.iv, L, II, 206-III, 23, S, 308-345. Cf. J. Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek: Alexius Comnenus and Bohemund in 1097-98', *BMGS*, 12 (1988), 185-277.

the main body formed by the theatre narratives. Some serious mistakes could result if she made a wrong connection, as she did in the case of the meeting called at the end of 1094 to condemn Leo former bishop of Chalcedon, which she supposed took place late in 1083 or early in 1084, soon after he had alienated the regime by his vociferous opposition to its expropriation of church treasure.[67] A similar mistake may be suspected in the case of the Golden Bull granting trading privileges to Venice, which Anna associated with the naval war against Robert Guiscard in 1084 but which should perhaps be kept in 1092 (the date on the extant late copy of the text) and associated rather with a bout of active diplomacy in the west.[68]

There are numerous small errors which can be explained in these terms. Others seem to attest a degree of chronological inexactitude suggestive occasionally of indifference. Thus, to give two examples of domestic episodes in which Anna was interested, the show trial of John Italos (February/March-11 April 1082) is dated a year too late,[69] and the conspiracy for which Anemas was being led to the place of punishment before Anna's eyes is misplaced by many years.[70] These errors, together with such others as can be detected (the death of Bohemond, for instance, which occurs six months after his departure from Dyrrachium, therefore in the first

[67] *Al.*, V.ii.6, L, II, 13, S, 159-160; *Al.*, VI.iii, L, II, 45-48, S, 184-186. P. Gautier, 'Le synode des Blachernes (fin 1094). Étude prosopographique', *REB*, 29 (1971), 213-284, 280-284.

[68] *Al.*, VI.v.10, L, II, 54-55, S, 191. O. Tůma, 'The dating of Alexius' chrysobull to the Venetians: 1082, 1084, or 1092?', *BS*, 42 (1981), 171-185.

[69] *Al.*, V.ix.5-7, L, II, 39-40, S, 179-180. J. Gouillard, 'Le procès officiel de Jean l'Italien. Les actes et leurs sousentendus', *TM*, 9 (1985), 133-174.

[70] Michael Anemas's conspiracy (*Al.*, XII.v-vi, L, III, 67-75, S, 380-386) is usually dated 1100/1101 (Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 100-101), but since Anna seems to have been young at the time and her correlation of the chronology of events in different spheres is not to be trusted, it should probably be placed close to Anemas's last attested tenure of a command, in the Cuman war of 1095 (*Al.*, X.ii.7, L, II, 194, S, 299). Anna firmly places it in the context of Alexios's preparations to meet the new threat from Bohemond in the first half of 1107 (*Al.*, XII.v.3-4, L, III, 69, S, 382), although later she gives a terminus ante quem of 1103/4 (*Al.*, XII.vii.1, L, III, 75, S, 386).

half of 1109 instead of 1111[71]), induce considerable trepidation in a modern reader anxious to establish a secure chronology for Alexios's reign. The anxiety grows much greater when it is realised that Anna completely disregarded chronology in her placing of her own long notice about the foundation of the *Orphanotropheion* charitable complex (firmly located in the 1090s[72]) and Nikephoros's account of the trial and death of Basil the Bogomil (which occurred before 1104[73]). For both items were held over to the eve of Alexios's death (thus acquiring an apparent date of 1117 or 1118) so as to highlight his Christian virtues, his defence of the faith and his charity.

Anna's other principal tasks were to fill out the material in Nikephoros's dossier, plugging gaps in the main military and diplomatic narrative, adding matter of her own choosing and comments of her own, and to subject all the material to a thorough stylistic upgrading. What can be identified of her personal input (and it was considerable), of her efforts to make the work her own, has been discussed in the section entitled **Anna's life and her contribution to the *Alexiad*** above. She was, in general, remarkably successful in giving coherence to the substance of the history which the *Alexiad* retailed and in giving it a homogeneous and polished literary veneer. But there were several gaping holes which she was unable to fill.

The Alexios of the *Alexiad* rules over a Byzantium encircled by powerful and predatory neighbours. His is a beleaguered regime, forced to confront successive serious threats from abroad. He is first and foremost a crisis-manager who copes skilfully with problems as they burst upon him. There is nothing untoward about this picture. It corresponds, in general terms, to historical reality. It appears also to have been the standard official view in the reign of

[71] *Al.*, XIV.i.1, L, III, 141-142, S, 435. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader states*, 80-81.

[72] *Al.*, XV.vii.4-9, L, III, 214-218, S, 492-496. Zonaras, XVIII.24, ed. Büttner-Wobst, 744-745.

[73] *Al.*, XV.viii-x, L, III, 218-229, S, 496-504; Papachryssanthou, 'Date de la mort d'Isaac Comnène', 253.

his immediate successor, John II Komnenos.[74] For it served the interests of the Komnenian family and affinity, by focusing attention on the founder of the dynasty and the heroic feats by which he saved Byzantium. But it is, of course, tendentious and in one vital respect very misleading. For Alexios is presented as a ruler who cannot anticipate nor forestall danger. Successive threats from abroad take him by surprise. Those diplomatic antennae which used to reach far outside the borders of Byzantium, into and beyond the surrounding zones of active diplomacy, have retracted. Alexios's government no longer senses and reacts in good time to new power-formations in remote regions. Contingency planning and an interventionist, pre-emptive diplomacy have been abandoned at the very time that they are most needed.[75]

This picture is a travesty of the truth. There is no reason to suppose that there was a temporary collapse of Byzantine statecraft in the reign of Alexios. On the contrary, other sources as well as the not inconsiderable body of material based on diplomatic documents which is included in the *Alexiad* provide ample evidence to show that he set about orchestrating the movements and conflicts among near and distant peoples in a never ending attempt to increase Byzantine leverage and open up opportunities for successful military action against key targets. Alexios should therefore be viewed as a precursor of his grandson Manuel who placed much reliance on an ubiquitous diplomacy to prepare the ground for carefully timed and targeted offensive actions of his own, although Alexios probably preferred to work with traditional discretion rather than with the showmanship of Manuel.[76]

The reason for this misrepresentation of historical reality is to be found in the exclusion of those long digressions on the geography, customs, monuments, curiosities and history of foreign peoples which convention required of high-style, classicising histories.

[74] P. Maas, 'Die Musen des Kaisers Alexios I', *BZ*, 22 (1913), 348-369; P. Magdalino and R. Nelson, 'The emperor in Byzantine art of the twelfth century', *ByzForsch*, 8 (1982), 123-183, 126-130.

[75] J. Shepard, 'Aspects of Byzantine attitudes and policy towards the west in the tenth and eleventh centuries', *Byzantium and the west c.850-c.1200*, ed. J.D. Howard-Johnston (Amsterdam, 1988), 67-118, 70-85.

[76] Magdalino, *Empire*, 41-108.

Such digressions were valued, as were speeches, not only for the colour and variety which they added to the main narrative, but also for the contributions which they might make to the explanation of events.[77] The *Alexiad* is shorn of historical digressions of this sort, which would have provided a context for a rounded account of Byzantine foreign policy in the reign of Alexios. There is no report about contemporary events in the most easterly regions of Europe. There is not a word about the history of Russia in a crucial phase of forced contraction northward into the wooded steppe and forest zones, nor about the struggles for supremacy in the Pontic steppes between rival nomadic federations.[78] There is no coherent account of political developments within the Islamic world,[79] so that readers of the text are deprived of the background knowledge required if they are to understand the specific episodes in Byzantine-Turkish relations which are described or the great drama of the First Crusade and the subsequent history of the Crusader states in Outremer. Instead of an analysis of the Latin west at a crucial phase in its political articulation (and how the modern historian aches to have an informed Byzantine assessment),[80] all that is supplied is a superficial and biased account of the origins of the Investiture Controversy.[81] Instead of probing deep into the interior of the west for the springs of the crusading movement (and indeed documenting the part played by Byzantine diplomacy and propaganda in inflaming opinion against Islam), the *Alexiad* is silent about the causes of the First Crusade.[82]

It has been suggested recently that this last silence was quite deliberate. Anna, viewed as the principal progenitor of the *Alexiad*, has been made responsible for suppressing all references to Alexios's part in activating Latin Christendom to come to the rescue of

[77] R.C. Blockley, *The fragmentary classicising historians of the later Roman empire*, I (Liverpool, 1981), 11-12, 35-36, 90-91.
[78] D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine commonwealth* (London, 1971), 223-232.
[79] C. Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey* (London, 1968); 29-32, 45-48, 72-93.
[80] A masterly summary is presented by D. Whitton, 'The society of northern Europe in the high middle ages, 900-1200', *The Oxford illustrated history of medieval Europe*, ed. G. Holmes (Oxford, 1988), 115-174.
[81] *Al.*, I.xiii, L, I, 47-51, S, 61-65.
[82] *Al.*, X.v.4, L, II, 206, S, 308.

eastern Christendom, in particular to his dealings with the papacy both before and during the First Crusade. Two motives have been imputed to her: either filial loyalty led her to deny that Alexios played any part in the inception of a movement which, in the event, was to pose enormous and continuing problems for Byzantium; or she allowed dislike of the westernising policies of her nephew Manuel to reshape the history which she was writing during his reign (hence the diatribes against westerners, all of which are attributed to her), and to deny that Alexios had provided any precedent for Manuel's active diplomatic involvement in the run-up to the Second Crusade.[83]

There is, however, a third, simpler explanation for this silence, which also accounts for the general shallowness of the diplomatic perspective of the *Alexiad*. **There was virtually nothing about the outer reaches of the world around Alexios's empire in the dossier of materials which Anna inherited from Nikephoros.** The demanding task of introducing general surveys of the recent history of three huge neighbouring regions, each of which was undergoing profound structural change, evidently daunted Nikephoros. A lifetime spent at or near the apex of government may have given him the necessary expertise—a wide-ranging diplomatic vision, a proper appreciation of the interplay between the different arms of foreign policy, and inside knowledge of short-term shifts of priority and of the framing grand strategy. But he appears to have put off the task of sketching in the full historical and diplomatic background which was needed for a proper understanding of Alexios's actions. His intention, it may be surmised, was to introduce this material at the final stage of drafting his history, when he would be combining his drafts to form a single coherent whole, when a general assessment of the problems facing Alexios and an overview of his foreign policy would have been required. It was a stage which his untimely death prevented him reaching.

[83] Shepard, 'Attitudes and policy', 102-117; R.D. Thomas, 'Anna Comnena's account of the First Crusade: history and politics in the reigns of Alexius I and Manuel I Comnenus', *BMGS*, 15 (1991), 269-312.

Anna, who lacked the necessary knowledge and understanding, could not possibly add the required background information herself. A task which had daunted Nikephoros was quite beyond her. So she had to improvise some overall theme for a history which concentrated on the actions of Alexios's government rather than the circumstances and motivations which might explain them. Her solution, very far from novel, was to liken Alexios to a skilful helmsman steering Byzantium through high seas and buffeting storms, and to articulate the history of his reign around a series of challenges from without, each of which was as unpredictable as a natural event.[84]

Conclusion

The *Alexiad* is not a seamless whole, produced by a single managing mind. It is the joint product of a rather ill-assorted literary partnership, the finest historian which Byzantium produced and an intellectual with wide-ranging but basically non-historical interests. The story which it presents, for all its classicising gloss, is closer to that of a chronicle than of a history properly speaking. It is ill-framed and unbalanced. The only explanations, often only implicit, offered for the events which are reported in such great detail are the interplay between them and the virtues of the main protagonist, the heroic figure of Alexios.

Nonetheless it is a work of immense historical value. It presents military and political history of a very high order. Its main component parts, the campaign narratives and extended anecdotes about stratagems and plots in high places, have no equal in the whole corpus of Byzantine historical writing. Its strengths, which are those of its component parts, derive, in the main, from Nikephoros, who supplied the great majority of the material. Much of it, it has been argued, had reached the form of connected compositions at a less or more advanced stage of drafting by the time of his death. Its weaknesses too are largely attributable to Nikephoros. They stem largely from his decision to tackle the whole

[84] *Al.*, III.vi.2, L, I, 119-120, S, 116; *Al.*, III.ix.1-2, L, I, 130-131, S 124-125; *Al.*, VI.xiv.1, L, II, 81, S, 212; *Al.*, X.ii.1, L, II, 189-190, S, 295-296; *Al.*, XIV.vii.1-2, L, III, 172-173, S, 458-459.

of Alexios's reign in one go, rather than breaking it down into a series of more manageable sub-periods. Although a great deal had been composed by the time of his death, there was no framing structure within which to place his drafts, and no start had been made on presenting in connected form the vital background information about the peoples neighbouring Byzantium which was needed to make sense of the dominant theme of the text, Alexios's foreign policy. On many subjects too, Nikephoros's work had not advanced much beyond the initial stage of note-taking and the organising of material into files.

Anna therefore faced an unenviable task when she decided to complete the project after Nikephoros's death. Hers was to be a long and sweated labour of love. Order had to be introduced into the dossier of disparate materials which she inherited—a task performed with considerable but not complete success. Much rewriting was needed to give the work stylistic homogeneity—the measure of Anna's success has been the readiness of her readers to credit her with the composition of the whole work. Various bits of infill were needed both to plug obvious gaps in the narrative and to inject something of Anna's interests into the text—such additions as were within Anna's power were added, the result being a broadening of interest and the introduction of links, sometimes rather clumsy and historically inaccurate, between Nikephoros's drafts. Finally, the whole work had to be given shape—this was achieved by accentuating the biographical element.

It is surprising that the relative importance of the contributions of husband and wife to the *Alexiad* was not recognised long ago. For, as has already been shown, Anna does not conceal her debt to Nikephoros. She gives a clear indication that his work on the *Alexiad* extended well beyond the composition of the *Material for a history*, and she is unstinting in her praise of his intellectual and literary attainments. It is worth perhaps lingering a moment and listening to her words, which should leave us in no doubt about her admiration for Nikephoros and his writings. They should surely be taken as her way of acknowledging how much of the *Alexiad*, in its final form, she owed to him.

In the preface, she introduces Nikephoros as a quite remarkable man, whose accomplishments included intelligence of the highest

order and linguistic virtuosity.[85] She expresses admiration for his style and views his death both as a serious loss to history and as depriving his readers of pleasure.[86] But it is in a later aside that she reveals the full extent of her devotion and respect for her late husband:

> 'this man had a fine intellect and was a yet finer writer. Everything—strength, quickness, a handsome physique, all the good qualities of mind and body came together and adorned that man. In him nature brought forth and God fashioned a quite outstanding man. It could be said of my caesar, as Homer sang of Achilles among the Achaeans, that he shone out among all those who live beneath the sun. He was an excellent soldier and by no means unmindful of literature; he read all books and by applying himself to every science derived much wisdom from them, both concerning our own and earlier times. Later on he turned to writing...'.[87]

Anna is quite right. Nikephoros's *Alexiad*, forming as it does the main body of the text which she edited and filled out, is a remarkable work of history. It can stand comparison, even in its unfinished state, with the very best of Byzantine, indeed of medieval, historical writing. Without its coverage of aristocratic and military affairs in the time of Alexios Komnenos, we would be hard put to understand how Byzantium confronted the second great crisis of its existence, how the court-centred aristocracy which articulated state and society regrouped and re-organised after the shattering losses of the 1070s, how an independent east Christian state managed to survive the manifold dangers threatening it from without and to claw its way back to a position of international leadership in the near east, how a culture which seemed destined for a sudden, brutal demise sustained itself through dark days and prepared the way for a new advance, in the mid-twelfth century... Without the *Alexiad*, it would be quite impossible to write the history of Alexios Komnenos's reign or to organise a colloquium as rewarding as that held at Portaferry.

[85] *Al.*, pr.iii.1-2, L, I, 5, S, 19.
[86] *Al.*, pr.iii.3, L, I, 6, S, 19-20.
[87] *Al.*, VII.ii.6, L, II, 91, S, 220.

14

Open space / closed space: the perceived worlds of Kekaumenos and Digenes Akrites

Catia Galatariotou

This paper discusses aspects of two Byzantine texts: the *Precepts and Tales* of Kekaumenos, and the poem of *Digenes Akrites*, in the version in which it was preserved in the Grottaferrata manuscript.[1] At first sight there appears to be no good reason for comparing Kekaumenos's text and *Digenes Akrites*. *Digenes* is an epic poem, centring around the *genos*, exploits and death of its idealised, romanticised hero. It was written by an individual who, working in or close to a given current popular tradition of ballads or stories, produced an original work of literature—a work thus born of the marriage of traditions of oral heroic poetry and of the anonymous author's skills of story-telling. These skills the author of the G *Digenes* employs with a sensitivity akin to that of a novelist in his preoccupation with the internal structure, coherence and continuity of the story; and concerning this aspect of his work he can in-

It is a pleasure to thank Charlotte Roueché, who is preparing a critical edition and translation of Kekaumenos's text, for stimulating discussion and practical help concerning this paper.

1 *Digenes Akrites*, ed. and tr. J. Mavrogordato (Oxford, 1956), hereafter cited as *Digenes*. Kekaumenos, *Strategikon*, ed. B. Wassiliewsky and V. Jernstedt *Cecaumeni Strategicon* (St Petersburg, 1896; repr. Amsterdam, 1965); *Sovety i rasskazy Kekavmena* (*Cecaumeni Consilia et Narrationes*), ed. G.G. Litavrin (Moscow, 1972): hereafter respectively cited as Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, and ed. Litavrin. Litavrin's edition is clearly superior but also relatively inaccessible to western readers; I therefore cite both editions.

deed claim a considerable degree of success.[2] Yet it is easy to forget that an individual wrote the G *Digenes*: the author does not introduce himself to the reader, but keeps silent about himself as though to acknowledge the tremendous debt which his work owed to the popular, collective imagination which had created the oral poetic traditions from which he so abundantly drew. By contrast, the reader is never allowed to forget that one specific individual wrote the *Precepts and Tales*: by introducing himself and his *genos* to the reader, by presenting himself and members of his family as witnesses to the events described, and by directly addressing the reader under various guises (as a son, a general, an *akrites* and so on), Kekaumenos establishes a direct and personal contact between author, text and reader.[3] Two further sharp con-

[2] This is not the place to account for the extraordinary diversity of opinion concerning almost every aspect of *Digenes*. I confine myself to a discussion of the G version alone; and to essential and directly relevant references. For further bibliography on the G, see most recently the papers by C. Galatariotou, 'The primacy of the Escorial *Digenes Akrites*: an open and shut case?', S. Alexiou, '*Digenes Akrites*: Escorial or Grottaferrata? An overview', E. Jeffreys, 'The Grottaferrata version of *Digenes Akrites*: a reassessment', in *Digenes Akrites: new approaches to Byzantine heroic poetry*, ed. R. Beaton and D. Ricks (Variorum, 1993), 38-54, 15-25, 26-37; C. Galatariotou, 'Structural oppositions in the Grottaferrata *Digenes Akrites*', *BMGS*, 11 (1987), 29-68; R. Beaton, *The medieval Greek romance* (Cambridge, 1989), 27-40; and note Beaton's paper, below, 329-338. On the internal coherence and structure of G see especially G. Kastner, 'Narrative unity in the Digenes Akrites', ed. J.W. Baker, *Second Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, University of Wisconsin* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1976), 35-36; Galatariotou, 'Structural oppositions'; Beaton, *The medieval Greek romance*, 35-38; and most recently Galatariotou, 'Primacy', *Digenes Akrites*, ed. Beaton and Ricks.

[3] For reference to himself and to members of his family, see Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 39.12-13, 39.19, 65.11, 66.10, 72.21-22; ed. Litavrin, 194.31-196.1, 250.14, 252.15, 266.2; and see 56-77. For addresses to the reader as servant of an *archon*, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 5.9, ed. Litavrin, 124.28; servant of the emperor, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 5.14, Litavrin, 126.4; servant in a private household, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 5.29, ed. Litavrin, 126.19; thematic judge, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 6.4, ed. Litavrin, 126.26; *grammatikos*, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 8.27, ed. Litavrin, 132.22; *strategos*, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 9.4 ff., ed. Litavrin, 134.1 ff.; *akrites*, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 21.11, 24.22, 26.10, ed. Litavrin, 158.21, 166.7, 168.37; private householder, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 36.10, ed.

trasts to *Digenes* may also be noted here. First, the author of the *Precepts and Tales* insists that the series of advice and admonitory tales which comprise his text are all based on real life's bitter experience.[4] Second, it is difficult even to use the word 'composition' in respect of Kekaumenos's text: it consists of parts dealing with different subjects, and of unequal lengths; and no attempt is made by the author to provide an organic structural link between them.[5]

The two texts thus most obviously differ in three basic respects: first, in what they present themselves as being (*Digenes*, a work of fiction; the *Precepts and Tales*, a work of fact); second, in the degree of adherence to basic rules of composition; third, in the extent of the explicit historical-biographical presence of the author in each text. Yet the present writer is certainly not the first to note that alongside these differences there exists also a great amount of common ground between the two texts. Briefly, this basically consists of the following similarities.[6]

Chronologically, the two works are contemporary or near contemporary. Kekaumenos wrote in the second half of the eleventh century (most likely in the 1070s) though some of the information he used went back at least two generations.[7] The dating of the G

Litavrin, 188.20; clergyman, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 51.24, ed. Litavrin, 220.26-27; soldier, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 54.12, ed. Litavrin, 226.18; Kekaumenos's own offspring, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 54.6, 66.12, 76.3, ed. Litavrin, 226.13, 252.17, 272.17-18.

[4] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 19.23-26, 39.12-13, 75.30-76.9; ed. Litavrin, 156.3-5, 194.31-196.1, 272.12-23.

[5] See Lemerle, *Prolégomènes*, 12-18.

[6] For a recent important discussion of aspects of this common ground, see P. Magdalino, 'Honour among Romaioi: the framework of social values in the world of Digenes Akrites and Kekaumenos', *BMGS*, 13 (1989), 183-218. See also I. Ševčenko, 'Constantinople viewed from the eastern provinces in the Middle Byzantine period', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 3-4 (1979-1980), 712-747, esp. 726-735, repr. in I. Ševčenko, *Ideology, letters and culture in the Byzantine world* (London, 1982), VI.

[7] On the date of Kekaumenos's text, see Lemerle, *Prolégomènes*, 18-19; Ševčenko, 'Constantinople viewed from the provinces', 727; Magdalino, 'Honour among Romaioi', 189-90; Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 90; A. Kazhdan in collaboration with S. Franklin, *Studies on Byzantine literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Cambridge, 1984), 39; C. Roueché, 'Byzantine writers and readers:

Digenes is more contentious. Here, I would simply state my agreement with the scholars who consider this version to be most probably the oldest and closest to the original poem, dating the manuscript to c.1300 and the original poem to the late eleventh or very early twelfth century.[8] It too draws from the past, containing material from the late ninth to the early eleventh centuries. Geographically, both works are distant from Constantinople. They are firmly rooted in the provinces, and especially the border regions. *Digenes* unequivocally refers to the empire's eastern Byzantine-Arab frontier regions. Kekaumenos is as familiar with the people who lived in the frontier and just beyond or behind it as *Digenes* is; and even though Kekaumenos and his ancestors had strong connections with the Balkans (with Larissa in particular), they also had probably stronger connections with the eastern frontier regions of the empire: the Kekaumenoi, fully Byzantinised by the second half of the eleventh century, had their roots in the Armeno-Georgian district of Taiq, which became part of the theme of Iberia

story telling in the eleventh century', *The Greek Novel, AD 1-1985*, ed. R. Beaton (London, New York, Sydney, 1988), 123-133, esp. 125.

[8] For bibliography on the dating of the G *Digenes* see Galatariotou, 'Structural oppositions', 30-31, notes 4-7; to which must now be added Magdalino, 'Honour among Romaioi', 189-190, and especially Galatariotou, Jeffreys, *Digenes Akrites*, ed. Beaton and Ricks. Note that in his recent edition of the E *Digenes* S. Alexiou forcefully argues for but does not, in my opinion, ultimately prove the chronological priority of the E over the G version: S. Alexiou, *Βασίλειος Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτης καὶ τὸ Ἄσμα τοῦ Ἀρμούρη* (Athens, 1985), Introduction, esp.ζα'-ρβ'; and most recently, *idem*, *Βασίλειος Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτης καὶ τὰ ἄσματα τοῦ Ἀρμούρη καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Ἀνδρονίκου* (Athens, 1990), 54-70. Followed by D. Ricks, 'Is the Escorial Akrites a unitary poem?' *B*, 30 (1989), 184-207, esp. 184; D. Ricks, *Byzantine heroic poetry* (Bristol, 1990), 3ff; and a number of contributors to *Αριάδνη. Αφιέρωμα στον Σ. Αλεξίου*, 5 (1989), notably G.M. Sephakes, 'Ζητήματα Ποιητικής του Διγενή Ε καί των ακριτικών τραγουδιών', 125-139, esp. 125-6; B. Fenik, 'Epic narrative style in the Escorial *Digenis Akritis*', 141-148, esp. 141; though note, in the same volume, the much more cautious and historically informed approach of A. Markopoulos, 'Ο Διγενής Ἀκρίτης καί ἡ Βυζαντινή χρονογραφία. Μία πρώτη προσέγγιση', 165-171. Against Alexiou, see especially Galatariotou, 'Primacy', and Jeffreys, 'Reassessment', *Digenes Akrites*, ed. Beaton and Ricks.

after its annexation to the empire by Basil I.[9] Socially, the two texts emerged from the same milieu, of the provincial military *dynatoi*. This is reflected in their similar (though not identical) views concerning Constantinople and the emperor. Their attitude towards both is ambiguous: on the one hand—and in different degrees—they pay their respects to the emperor and the Queen City; on the other they are—again in different degrees —mistrustful and emotionally, as well as physically, distant from both. They agree thus on their projection of an image of relative disconnection and quasi-independence (whether 'real' or 'wishful') from Constantinople.[10] Educationally too the two authors are comparable, neither being highly educated. As though to emphasise both their lack of 'high' education and their distance from the capital, they produced texts which are unencumbered by classical allusions, official imperial propaganda, or religious dogma.[11] On a more immediate social level, both texts proclaim the absolute (physical, social, emotional) centrality of the *oikos*, projecting the image of the house and of the family within it as the central cell of human existence. As depicted in both texts, the *oikos* houses an extended family whose members live (or should live) in harmony: spouses, parents, children and other relatives, are bound to each other by strong and almost exclusive relationships. Both texts tend to treat relatives as friends; while the family's material possessions, as well as its servants and slaves, also form an indispensable part of the *oikos*. The feeling that the family is an institution to be cherished and protected is related to other attitudes which the two works also manifest in common—such as the emphasis on the desirability and almost even sanctity of marriage, the idealisation of motherhood, the disapproval of second marriage, the condemnation of adultery. Finally, both texts

[9] Lemerle, *Prolégomènes*, 56; Ševčenko, 'Constantinople viewed from the provinces', 729-30.

[10] Ševčenko, 'Constantinople viewed from the provinces', 728-30; Galatariotou, 'Structural oppositions', 40-44; Magdalino, 'Honour among Romaioi', 217.

[11] Concerning the latter, both texts contain insistent references to strong religious feeling but generally not to the institutions of the Church or to religious dogma.

are preoccupied with the concepts of honour and shame, honour being also directly linked to the *oikos*.[12]

The presence of such extensive common (identical and/or similar) ground between the two texts indicates the extent of their common cultural provenance. It also indicates that, as has already been observed by scholars, they are complementary rather than mutually exclusive. So far, the two texts have been compared by scholars with reference to the common ground between them. By contrast, the aspect of *Digenes* and Kekaumenos which will concern us here is not one in which the two texts express complete agreement or substantial similarity; but one in which they stand worlds apart.

The instances in which *Digenes* and Kekaumenos completely oppose each other in terms of attitudes and mentalities are very numerous; and they refer to episodes or details which are apparently unconnected, both upon comparison between the texts and within each individual text. Yet careful reading reveals that most of these numerous and apparently haphazardly existing passages are connected within each text—for each text has within it what we might call a 'psycho-structural' link, which provides internal coherence. This link can be abstracted and summarised in terms of one binary opposition: that between open space, and closed space; related to which is the extent to which movement is allowed to flow in and out of that space.

The body

The most essential space of all is of course that which contains the mind: the body, with its five senses. The senses provide the avenues of communication between the inner space (the self) and the outside world. But the mind (or, if you prefer, the psyche) interprets and reformulates the information received through the senses of the body. The way the world is *perceived* by the self, according to its (conscious and unconscious) interpretation of the in-

[12] See Magdalino, 'Honour among Romaioi', from which the preceding paragraph drew extensively. For a discussion of the concept of friendship in Kekaumenos and other Byzantine sources see M. Mullett, 'Byzantium: a friendly society?', *P&P*, 118 (1988), 3-24.

formation received through the senses, is of central importance in the creation of the different mood which distinguishes *Digenes* from the *Precepts and Tales*, and which ultimately makes the two works so different. The way in which Kekaumenos and *Digenes* perceive the world and the human experience of being in it, is exemplified through the way each perceives the relationship between the senses of the body and the external world.

Eyes are of the greatest importance for both *Digenes* and Kekaumenos. It is around seeing, and being seen, that each of our narratives revolves to a very large extent. Being seen—the eye movement from outside observing the individual—is perceived by Kekaumenos in terms of aggression and attack. In the public sphere those who, using various pretexts, see one, do so only in order to spy on him.[13] In the private domain, the home, the observing eye becomes again a main avenue of attack: Kekaumenos advises his reader that the friend who comes to stay in his house will ogle the women of the household—the host's wife, daughters, daughters-in-law; he will pretend that he keeps his eyes on the ground, if his host is present, but in truth he will be observing the women; and if he is given half a chance he will look upon the host's wife with lustful eyes, and seduce her.[14] Or, if he does not see the women of the household, the guest is certain, if he is a curious man, to start looking around the host's house, taking mental notes of everything he sees, like some notary, in order to harm his host later.[15] Further, it is not only from the outside that eyes attack. Kekaumenos warns his reader that he stands in danger also because of what *he* sees: whether inside or outside the church, he may see women; and eyes, looking at women, become gates through which the devil will attack that man's soul.[16]

[13] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, e.g. 13.22-32; ed. Litavrin, 142.29-144.8.

[14] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 42.26-43.11; ed. Litavrin, 202.11-204.2.

[15] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 44.19-22; ed. Litavrin, 206.11-14.

[16] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 47.12-13, 54.21-26; ed. Litavrin, 212.7-8, 226.27-228.4.

Kekaumenos's reaction to these perceived attacks is to build defensive walls around himself: best not to look at women at all, he advises.[17] As for attacks from outside, through being seen, his reaction is twofold. First, again, to bolt the doors—often, in this case, physically too: best not to allow guests inside your house; best not to let the curious through your door;[18] best to instruct your servant to look down when speaking to his mistress.[19] Then, from this closed space, which allows no eye to penetrate inside it, Kekaumenos reverses the roles: he can be the pre-emptive attacker, by being the one who sees others. He is quite famous for his obsession with spying, which he regards as essential for one's very survival. He believes that without spies a man is helpless;[20] and that the only way to protect oneself is by having eyes, observing, recording, everywhere—in the capital and in the guilds, on the frontier and the more central provinces: this is his advice to *strategos*, *akrites* and civil *archon* alike.[21] But even so, Kekaumenos still does not ultimately feel secure—for no matter how many eyes one keeps on others, through spies, he still has no eyes in the back of his head; and thus 'you' still 'do not know what they are conspiring to do behind your back'.[22] Kekaumenos's insecurity is encapsulated in one phrase: 'daily, have your fall before your very eyes'. This is what Kekaumenos's mind's eye perceives, every day: his destruction and fall.[23]

In *Digenes* the eyes are equally important; but in ways which, even though frequently accepting Kekaumenos's basic premises,

[17] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 47.12-13, 54.23-24; ed. Litavrin, 212.7-8, 226.29-228.2.

[18] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 42.26-29, 43.16-44.8, 44.19-20; ed. Litavrin, 202.12-16, 204.7-30, 206.11-12.

[19] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 5.29-31; ed. Litavrin, 126.19-22.

[20] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 9.29-30; ed. Litavrin, 134.25-27.

[21] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 5.1-5, 9.4-32, 10.33-11.11, 25.3-6, 26.1-2; ed. Litavrin, 124.20-24, 134.1-29, 138.1-12, 166.19-21, 168.17-19.

[22] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 3.15-16; ed. Litavrin, 122.3-5. Note also God's 'unsleeping eye', which sees everything: e.g. ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 42.24-25, 46.5-6; ed. Litavrin, 202.9-11, 208.30.

[23] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 3.15; ed. Litavrin, 122.4.

yet perceive these premises from a totally opposite angle. Take love, for instance. *Digenes* agrees with Kekaumenos (as indeed with many before and after him) that love wounds the soul through the gates of the eyes.[24] 'Beauty is very sharp, its arrow wounds, And through the very eyes reaches the soul', Digenes says.[25] The Girl, whose seclusion was such that she had never seen or been seen by a man,[26] is thus wounded the minute she sees Digenes. She is indeed transfixed by what she sees: 'she wanted from the youth to lift her eyes', but could not.[27] And when Digenes sees her, his soul is also wounded.[28] Later, Digenes expresses this penetration of love through the eyes by telling the Girl that, "From the hour... we saw each other, You went not from my soul one little hour, Rooted within, you were intertwined in it'.[29] Within this context, the *strategos*'s awful punishment of his daughter's suitors becomes comprehensible: he either beheads them or, more to the point, he blinds them.[30]

Beauty itself is intimately linked, in *Digenes*, with the eyes of the beautiful person: the Emir's gaze is described as 'full of love'; Digenes is described as having large eyes; the description of the Girl's beauty begins with that of her eyes, while Philopappos says of her that 'from her eyes shed grace unspeakable'.[31] The eyes are

[24] Aeschylos was but one of the earliest exponents of the idea that sexual love begins with eye contact. See G. Thomson's comments on the affinity between *ὁρᾶν* ('seeing') and *ἐρᾶν* ('loving'), in his *Aischylous, Oresteia* (Cambridge, 1938), I, 427-8; ii, 53-54 (my thanks to Professor Margaret Alexiou for drawing this to my attention). See also St Basil, *PG*, 30, col. 704 (love begins through eye-contact); and for an example of this belief in modern rural Greece, J.K. Campbell, *Honour, family and patronage* (Oxford, 1964), 326-8. See generally C. Galatariotou, '*Eros* and *Thanatos*: A Byzantine hermit's conception of sexuality', *BMGS*, 13 (1989), 95-137, esp. 111-113.

[25] *Digenes*, 90.275-276.

[26] *Digenes*, 104.492-499.

[27] *Digenes*, 90.278.

[28] *Digenes*, 94.357-359; also 92.310-318, 106.541-546.

[29] *Digenes*, 106.541-543.

[30] *Digenes*, 90.296-92.298.

[31] *Digenes*, respectively, 4.35-36, 78.197, 94.353-356, 186.411.

indeed revered by the lovers, who kiss the eyes of their beloved;[32] while tears flowing from the eyes become a very frequent way in which the overflowing of emotion and especially of love is depicted.[33]

Love, whether sexual or not, is expressed in terms of seeing and of being able to see. Thus Eirene's mother calls her 'light of my eyes'; the Emir calls his wife 'my sweet light'; and Digenes repeats the same phrase, and others similar to this, when he addresses the Girl.[34] By contrast, not being able to see a beloved person is equated by the beholder to having lost not just the sight of the beloved person but the ability to see altogether. Thus, characteristically, when the Girl is abducted the *strategos*'s first words are: 'I have lost my light/ My only daughter lifted from my eyes'.[35] So too, lamenting for the loss of their sister, Eirene's brothers say that her (presumed) death 'put out our light';[36] and the Emir's mother tells him that through absconding to Cappadocia 'You have put out my light, blinded my eyes'; 'not seeing you, I would not see light at all/ Nor sun shining'.[37]

And if seeing is a good thing in *Digenes*, being seen is equally so for the man of honour—in marked contrast to Kekaumenos. For example, Digenes is careful to hide the Girl so that she is not seen by the shameful reivers, but he makes sure that *he* can be seen by her: 'Sit there my loveliest and watch your dear', he tells her, putting her on a tree or in a cave.[38] Similarly, Haplorabdes's daughter

[32] *Digenes*, 60.288: the Emir kisses his wife's eyes. The love does not have to be explicitly sexual—e.g. the Emir and Constantine kiss Digenes's eyes after his first dazzling demonstration of hunting skills and power: *Digenes*, 76.191. Also note that upon the death of the Emir, Digenes is heartbroken for not having arrived earlier to close his dead father's eyes: *Digenes*, 224.140.

[33] *Digenes*, e.g. 20.299, 22.319, 38.236, 40.267, 40.282, 50.123, 70.93, 104.521, 110.590, 152.177, 222.18.

[34] *Digenes*, 20.19, 52.132, 60.290, 106.541, 120.765, 214.830, 236.91, 236.69. So Haplorabdes's daughter too was called by her lover 'his eyes' light': *Digenes*, 148.107.

[35] *Digenes*, 100.600-601.

[36] *Digenes*, 16.38; and later Eirene's mother sings in joy: 'O (...) light of my eyes, When shall I see thee living?': *Digenes*, 24.19-20.

[37] *Digenes*, respectively, 26.52, 50.136-137.

[38] *Digenes*, 112.633, 194.525-529.

also watches him from a tree while he performs acts of valour.[39] Seeing and being seen provides a proof that a man possesses that supreme—in Digenes—virtue: *andreia*. Thus, Digenes tells Philopappos that the old man now knows Digenes's prowess, for 'your proper eyes witnessed what was done'.[40] And, again in contrast to Kekaumenos, when eyes watch a man it is usually not to harm him but to acknowledge and admire his qualities: the Syrian rulers, says the Emir, 'Seeing me fortunate in all my wars/ They made me ruler over all Syria'.[41] It is only the chief carriers of shame in the poem—the reivers—who do not dare see: they retreat 'Not even venturing to look behind them';[42] and they do not want to be seen either: Philopappos's only relief after his company's first disastrous fight with Digenes is that no-one else was present to witness their shameful fight and defeat.[43]

Just as what goes into and out of the eyes—the act of seeing and being seen—flows in *Digenes* like an undisturbed river, so too it happens with the mouth. Words flow out of the mouth in *Digenes*, to express love, joy, honour.[44] The exception is, again, provided by the shameful reivers, who speak to deceive.[45] Like loss of sight, loss of speech is also a negative indicator: Philopappos's speechlessness, because of his fright, when he fights with Digenes, provides a sharp contrast to Digenes's great flow of words when he fights the reivers or when he encounters and advises the emperor.[46]

As the characters in Digenes let the words flow out of their mouth, so with equal ease they let food and drink flow into their mouth. Eating and drinking becomes a concrete and indispensable expression of happiness, health and plenty. Feasts mark the joys of

[39] *Digenes*, 154.193-194.

[40] *Digenes*, 178.286.

[41] *Digenes*, 20.289-290.

[42] *Digenes*, 200.635-636.

[43] *Digenes*, 182.339-340.

[44] And note, e.g. *Digenes*, 102.456-479, 106.532-108.562: Digenes persuades the Girl to elope with him after a lot of talking to her.

[45] *Digenes*, e.g. to deceive Maximo: 186.394-188.424.

[46] *Digenes*, 178.270-271, 178.265-269, 178.283-180.295, 136.1028-1046, 134.1014-136.1017.

marriage, the happy life of the Emir and Eirene, of Digenes and the Girl; and the poet delights in describing the banquets, the 'due array of meats, the endless varied spectacle, countless Setting before them of all countless beasts ...'.[47] By contrast, not taking food and drink, not allowing anything to get in the mouth, is seen as a sure sign of introversion and worry, as Digenes's mother is quick to note when her son behaves thus just before he elopes with the Girl.[48]

This openness and movement stand as the very opposite of Kekaumenos's attitude towards the mouth. What comes out of the mouth is for him a potential threat. Words, he thinks, lead to trouble. He advises his reader not to speak with foolish people, and in any case to be on his guard when he speaks at all.[49] For if he speaks without being guarded, he will live like a man who, traversing a foreign and difficult land in mid-winter, and without a rest, suddenly slips and falls into a precipice: 'slipping will make you lose your balance; talking, your very head'.[50] He is full of contempt for those who talk a lot, the ἀθυροστομοῦντας, the γλωσσώδεις.[51] He strongly advises against attending symposia where people speak a lot.[52]

This is so because above all it is other people's mouths and tongues that Kekaumenos dreads. In his universe, what comes out of the mouth is deadly: 'deadly poison' comes out of the mouth of a snake, but also of a bad man, he warns;[53] people talk in order to harm: perverting the truth, they will slander a man to the emperor for saying things about him or about the empress which he never

[47] *Digenes*, 126.887-122.888, also 82.1029-1029, 226.174-175.

[48] *Digenes*, 96.380-391.

[49] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 4.3-4; ed. Litavrin, 122.22-24.

[50] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 61.7-12; ed. Litavrin, 240.24-242.1.

[51] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 3.1, 14.10; ed. Litavrin, 120.22, 144.18.

[52] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 4.27-32; ed. Litavrin, 124.14-20.

[53] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 61.21-23; ed. Litavrin, 242.10-12.

said.[54] They will gossip and laugh at him in respect of his wife and daughters or of his house, if they are given half a chance; the guest will not only commit adultery with the host's wife, but, adding insult to injury, he will then boast about it, as the young man who seduced the judge's wife did. And if he doesn't, the host's enemies will.[55] Further, when people start gossiping about one's wife, Kekaumenos says, the man himself will end up wondering whether he is truly the father of the new-born infant.[56]

Once more, Kekaumenos reacts to these perceived dangers by closing in. He imprisons his very words: 'maintain the strictest guard over your mouth', he says; and repeatedly advises his reader to be silent, even if he is being abused; to speak only when he must, and then to be very careful with what comes out of his mouth.[57]

Kekaumenos feels not only that he must keep tight control over what comes out of his mouth but also that, conversely, he must also keep tight control over what goes in it: one must not eat too much (and certainly not mushrooms); must drink only a little wine; must remember what happened to Noah when he got drunk.[58]

As he does with the gate of the mouth, so Kekaumenos also closes the gate of the ears. He does not suggest that one must speak or listen to people at all, for this might harm him.[59] But he

[54] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 4.3-13, 4.27-32; ed. Litavrin, 122.22-124.1, 124.14-20.

[55] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 42.30-44.8; ed. Litavrin, 202.16-204.30; see also, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 20.5-8, 63.18-21, 48.30-49.9, 55.21-29, 46.17-18; ed. Litavrin, 156.16-18, 246.13-16, 214.27-216.13, 228.31-230.7, 210.7-9.

[56] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 55.23-25; ed. Litavrin, 230.1-4.

[57] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 4.3-13, 40.32-41.1, 42.1-9, 44.30-45.3, 58.13-25; ed. Litavrin, 122.22-124.1, 198.15-17, 200.17-25, 206.22-27, 234.23-236.7.

[58] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 46.23, 46.30, 50.1, 5.19-22, 4.27, 61.2; ed. Litavrin, 122.22-124.1, 198.15-17, 200.17-25, 106.22-27, 234.23-236.7.

[59] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 42.1-8, 64.6-14, 15.28-16.9, 47.18-21; ed. Litavrin, 200.17-25, 248.4-12, 148.6-17, 212.14-16.

must suspect everything he hears. In the evenings, Kekaumenos interrogates himself over everything he heard and said during the day,[60] so as to judge whether what he heard was a servant's slander;[61] a wife's and a friend's well-meaning but foolish advice, which might destroy him;[62] people's malicious talk;[63] a *proxenetra*'s disastrous words;[64] or those of a temptress, whose sexually seductive words the devil will use to attack the listener's soul.[65]

In Digenes's world, by contrast, it is only exceptionally that what the ear receives is damning: Haplorabdes's daughter thus fell for the deceitful words of her lover; Maximo for those of Philopappos; and – far more seriously – it is because his mind was filled with the Girl's words that Digenes, enraged, murdered Maximo, destroying at a stroke not only her but also his chances of becoming the ideal hero.[66]

Much more frequently and much more characteristically, however, hearing becomes in *Digenes* an avenue not of hatred and destruction but of love and creativity. *Digenes* is full of sounds: even the hero's horse has golden bells, which make a delightful sound as he rides along.[67] He is well-trained in playing the lute, and his singing possesses the Sirens' seductive quality.[68] The sounds of music and singing, which are never allowed to penetrate Kekaumenos's closed world, are ever-present in *Digenes*. They extend through space like bridges of love, to link one person with

[60] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 61.4-7; ed. Litavrin, 240.21-24.

[61] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 7.23-8.16; ed. Litavrin, 130.17-132.11.

[62] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 40.3-31; ed. Litavrin, 196.19-198.14.

[63] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 40.32-41.33; ed. Litavrin, 198.15-200.17.

[64] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 56.1-30; ed. Litavrin, 230.10-232.8.

[65] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 54.21-26, esp. .25-26; ed. Litavrin, 226.27-228.4, esp. 228.2-3.

[66] *Digenes*, 146.71, 146.82, 146.85-87, 149.107-108 (cf. 150.136), 188.423-425, 214.834-838.

[67] *Digenes*, 80.232-236.

[68] *Digenes*, 98.395-405, 88.254-261.

another even when the two cannot see each other, thus overcoming the limitations of sight. Thus it is Digenes's singing that the Girl hears, and which first draws her attention to Digenes, before she actually sets eyes on him.[69] Music is company in times of loneliness: before he sets off to abduct the Girl Digenes stays alone in his room, playing the lute and singing softly of love; and when he rides to meet the Girl, he does so 'alone, holding his lute'.[70] When he arrives at the *strategos*'s house, the Girl is not waiting for him for, tired, she has fallen asleep. Her momentary lapse worries Digenes, who fears that her absence might indicate that she has changed her mind. Troubled, he relies on his lute to solve his dilemma: 'to test the Girl.../This lute a partner I will set between us', he resolves. The lute and his singing then become crucially important: the Girl wakes up because of these sounds; Digenes's fears are proved unfounded; and the lovers' planned escapade is saved.[71] Music also soothes the soul in time of trouble on another occasion, later on: when the Girl is saved from the dragon and the lion, she implores Digenes to take his lute and play, to 'Refresh my soul from terror of the beast'. He plays, she sings, and this scene of harmony is repeated later, in their house by the Euphrates, at the end of their dinners.[72]

Nor are Digenes and the Girl the only ones to sing and make music. Eirene's mother sings in joy, preparing for her daughter's wedding; relatives, friends, guests and servants break into singing – accompanied by trumpets and horns, drums and organs, lutes, 'every kind of music' – to celebrate the Emir's return, Digenes's home-coming with the Girl, or their wedding.[73] The music is always described as reaching outwards, being heard at a great distance.[74] And where there is music, singing and feasting, there shall of course also be dancing. In referring to *Digenes*'s banquets, the poet delights in describing the movement of the bodies of

[69] *Digenes*, 88.262.

[70] *Digenes*, 98.395-405.

[71] *Digenes*, 98.409-100.496.

[72] *Digenes*, 168.90-114, 226.160-173.

[73] *Digenes*, 24.26, 62.310-313, 120.788-122.799, 124.826-831, 124.848-850, 126.869, 128.889-891.

[74] *Digenes*, 88.259-261, 100.436-437, 122.797-799, 170.123-124.

dancing girls; and the Girl herself dances beautifully to Digenes's music.[75]

A world apart, Kekaumenos refers to women's bodies in movement only once, and in order to make a completely different point: the walking and turning of the body (*badisma, gyrisma, zosma*) of the household's women is what the insolent guest will observe if allowed inside Kekaumenos's house. He will do so to mimic them later and laugh at them with his friends.[76] There is no dancing in Kekaumenos's world, no singing, no feasting. Instead, he strongly advises against symposia. 'I know', he hastens to add, 'that if you follow this advice people will accuse you of being antisocial and a miser'.[77]

So they would, and who can blame them? For whereas the characters in *Digenes* delight in giving and taking pleasure, Kekaumenos advises the *strategos* to 'avoid pleasures... if you do not want to fall like a bird in a trap'.[78] The sad irony about Kekaumenos is that **he is already trapped**. He is trapped in his mind. He is trapped in a universe which he perceives as being so threatening, so relentlessly attacking, that all his energies are devoted to a struggle to draw his boundaries as closely as he possibly can; to close the gates—the eyes, the ears, the mouth—as firmly as he can, in order to stop anything from penetrating inside, and thus to preserve whatever is left inside his head intact.

Characteristically, Kekaumenos's nose is closed too. There is no reference to smells in Kekaumenos (other than the metaphorical one of the stink of putrefaction of unbefitting speech); whereas Digenes, typically, lies with the Girl in a bed around which 'All sorts of confections smoked...;/Musk, allspice, ambergris, camphor, and cassia./Great was the pleasure and smell of gladness'.[79]

[75] *Digenes*, 128.889-891, 226.160-170.

[76] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 43.1-5; ed. Litavrin, 202.19-24.

[77] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 4.27-29; ed. Litavrin, 124.14-16.

[78] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 24.20-21; ed. Litavrin, 166.5-6.

[79] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 61.11-12; ed. Litavrin, 240.28-242.1; *Digenes*, 164.38-40.

The last of the senses, touch, is also ever-present in Digenes's world, where people kiss, touch and embrace each other constantly.[80] Kekaumenos does not touch anyone lovingly, throughout his text, and this acts as a symbolic somatic manifestation of his emotional inability to trust. No secret can be entrusted by Kekaumenos, for in his mind the gates of perception are gates of destruction which are, furthermore, dangerously related to each other: opening one gate will automatically cause another one to open, with his destruction as a result. He thus advises that one should tell his secrets to no-one, for 'what comes in through the ears becomes public through the lips'.[81] Thus Kekaumenos's thoughts remain enclosed, guarded secrets, locked within his head.

By contrast, in *Digenes* secrecy is considered to be a sure sign of lack of trust, and as such abhorrent. The only acceptable secrecy is a temporary one between lovers, but even this conflicts with the trust which must be placed with one's family and friends. Thus, when Eirene's brothers discover that the Emir planned a secret flight to Syria, the Emir is shocked for he believes that Eirene betrayed his secret (and this causes the only instance of an open crisis in their marriage), but he is also ashamed for not having trusted his in-laws. Equally, Eirene's brothers apologise to him for their rash behaviour, but also tellingly add: 'the guilt is yours,/Not making known to us what you would do'.[82] Again, when Digenes, consumed with love, tries to keep his planned abduction of the Girl a secret, his mother knows immediately that something is wrong because he has let nothing past his lips (no food and drink went in; no words came out). She records her disapproval by telling him that 'he who hides his illness is by it consumed'.[83] Digenes is, in this instance, guilty, just as the guilt was

[80] *Digenes*, 60.279-289, 62.305-306, 62.326, 70.78-80, 76.190-191, 112.652, 120.783-786, 124.853, 136.1020-1021, 140.1085, 172.161-162, 202.666-667, 206.740-741.

[81] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 44.15-16; ed. Litavrin, 206.8-9; also ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 11.5, 12.2, 55.21-23, 55.25-29; ed. Litavrin, 138.6, 140.7, 228.31-230.1, 230.4-7.

[82] *Digenes*, 32.153-38.248.

[83] *Digenes*, 96.380-391.

the Emir's for not having trusted people around him—for having behaved, in effect, like Kekaumenos.[84]

Nature

The way in which Kekaumenos and the characters in *Digenes* relate to the first and most important space—their body—is extended to the way they relate to civilised society, but also to the greatest space of all: Nature. For Digenes, Nature is an open and friendly space, in and out of which he freely moves. In a process of liminality, reminiscent of the one encountered in a holy man's *Life*, Digenes moves out of the civilised world of built homes and castles, and into Nature.[85] His triumph consists in that he imposes *taxis* on the wilderness. This again is reminiscent of many a saint's story, though Digenes does so through his prowess and adherence to, and enforcement of, a code of honour and shame on those who inhabit the wilderness.[86] When Digenes, having proved his *andreia* at length moves out of Nature and his tent and settles in a palace, he does so by a great river, the Euphrates, thus being again with Nature. He also makes a wonderful garden around his house (a reference, in this context, to ordered, tamed Nature); and continues to move in and out of the wilderness constantly in his pursuit of hunting.[87]

Nature in *Digenes* is a familiar and friendly space for the hero to move in and out of: trees are there to provide shade, to provide comfort while waiting, to be hide-outs from evil: a cave is 'like a

[84] *Digenes* tries to redress his guilt somewhat by letting his mother know that his 'illness' (of which his secrecy is part) has to do with a woman: *Digenes*, 96.392-98.394. It is, again, the shameful who keep secrets in *Digenes*: Philopappos keeps Digenes's victory a secret from Maximo in order to deceive her: *Digenes*, 186.396-188.422.

[85] *Digenes*, 132.956-964. On hagiographical elements in *Digenes* see E. Trapp, 'Hagiographische Elemente im Digenes—Epos', *AB*, 94 (1976), 276-87; also Galatariotou, 'Structural oppositions', 39-40, esp. n. 39.

[86] See Magdalino, 'Honour among Romaioi', Galatariotou, 'Structural oppositions', 44-51.

[87] *Digenes*, 214.843-846, 216.7-218.41, 232.20-234.30; on nature in *Digenes* see the commentary and bibliography in Galatariotou, 'Structural oppositions', 40, n. 39.

natural house' in which one can hide and be safe.[88] Above all, Nature delights. Living in Nature, Digenes and the Girl lay in a bed surrounded by flowers, in the midst of a paradise of wondrous plants, beasts, birds, waters.[89] Nature is 'humanised' to rejoice with people: the hills skip, the rocks dance, the rivers gush up, the trees make merry, when Digenes returns home with the Girl.[90] And just as Nature joins in human joy, so humans become one with Nature: the Girl's face is described as a copy of Nature's beauty.[91]

This merging of the civilised with the natural world, and the establishment of a harmonious, benevolent whole which can contain the two and which allows the hero to move freely in and out of both, reflect the general mood of openness in *Digenes*. No such thing is possible for Kekaumenos. In direct contrast to *Digenes*, Kekaumenos fears rivers and advises his reader not to try and be 'manly' there.[92] Mountains and precipices, which Digenes so casually traverses, become for Kekaumenos deadly traps: one must not build his house under them, he warns, for a stone will surely roll down and fall on it, and the house will then become a grave. The night, which hides and protects Digenes on his way to abduct the Girl, is for Kekaumenos threatening. Food from Nature, on which Digenes and the Girl obviously lived for a long time, is also threatening for Kekaumenos, who claims that he knows that many households mourned because of poisonous mushrooms. Death also assumes the appearance of ice on a frozen river or lake, inviting one to walk on it, only to break and drown him. And if a man should not walk across a frozen river or lake, neither should he ride across a bridge: a small bit of wood will come unstuck, the horse will slip, and the man will be done for.[93] Nature is obviously

[88] *Digenes*, 112.631-632, 166.89-168.90, 172.174-175, 180.308-310, 194.533-537.

[89] *Digenes*, 162.3-164.41.

[90] *Digenes*, 124.834-840, and see also 124.845-846, .851-852.

[91] *Digenes*, 164.29-37.

[92] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 46.19-20; ed. Litavrin, 210.10-11. Cf. *Digenes*, 194.544-545, 196.572-198.583, 204.712, 206.527 (crossing the Euphrates), 134.993-995 (choosing the Euphrates as his meeting place with the emperor), 214.844-845, 216.7 (building his palace next to the great river).

[93] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 46.20-29; ed. Litavrin, 210.11-21.

a space which is threatening for Kekaumenos because it is too open and outside his control. After all, it is only in a space whose gates he can control and keep closed as much as possible, that Kekaumenos feels somewhat at home.

Buildings

Their manifest, literal meaning apart, the home and the castle also stand, in *Digenes* and in the *Precepts and Tales*, as unconscious metaphors for the way the self relates to the world through the senses. Tellingly, references to closed and fortified castles are rare in *Digenes*, despite the topography and general nature of the story.[94] Instead, castles have been turned into homes.[95] The same openness and easy ebb and flow of movement which we noted in relation to the characters in *Digenes*, also informs their relation to their homes. The *oikos* is carefully delineated, and protected, but references to defensive structures are almost totally absent;[96] while guards keep watch at the *biglai*, at the edge of the three-mile limits of the house, yet in *Digenes* their function is to be bearers of good news.[97]

Movement in and out of this three-mile space is constant. It is not only the families, with their relatives on either side, who live in the house.[98] Guests too are constantly coming and going. Digenes builds guest houses, of which the one closest to his home is re-

[94] *Digenes*, 2.9-11 (the Emir took Ankara which is described as a 'great and well-defended castle'), 50.111-121 (the Emir's mother lives in 'the castle of Rahab', but leaves it in order to meet him, and the meeting takes place outside it).

[95] The home itself has been turned into a microcosm of society, subsuming or containing state and ecclesiastical structures: armies stay within its bounds; births, baptisms, weddings and burials—the four major *rites de passage*—take place in the *oikos*: *Digenes*, 26.40-41, 26.47-48, 62.329, 116.696-740, 128.931-936, 222.102-108, 224.152-155, 228.190-192.

[96] See for example the very casual reference to the wall which Digenes built around his house on the Euphrates: *Digenes*, 216.15-16. The clear implication is that it is the men inside the house who are its true defenders, and who rely little on the built structures and much more on their *andreia*: in their absence, the *oikos* will fall: e.g. *Digenes*, 6.59-64, 18.270-276.

[97] *Digenes*, 120.785-788.

[98] *Digenes*, e.g. 42.297-298, 64.337-338, 224.156, 232.7-19.

served for relatives, who visit him and stay there for long periods of time.[99] Indeed, not to stay in a relative's or friend's house is seen as an odd and suspicious thing to do—hence Eirene's brothers' surprise and suspicious thoughts when they find the Arab friends of the Emir encamped 'far from our house'.[100] Further, within this three-mile space it is not only men but also women who move freely. Mothers, other female relatives, and women servants go out of the *oikos* to meet an honoured guest who arrives or a beloved who returns home; to escort him when he goes away; or to lament the death or loss of a beloved.[101] That women too move relatively freely in and out of the house is emphasised by the fact that even in the wilderness the Girl moves in and out of Digenes's tent frequently, with ease and on her own, as though negating on the basis of her married status her previous total seclusion as a virgin.[102]

The opposite is the case with Kekaumenos. Just as his body is a closed space, with the gates of his senses tightly controlled and shut, so is his house—a metaphor for his body. His advice to the reader is to close his doors, allowing no-one to step inside his house, for this will be disastrous: as we saw earlier, the women of the household will fornicate with the guest; the stranger will note down everything in order to later ridicule and attack his host. And just as Kekaumenos tries to stop people from penetrating into his house, so he also tries to minimise movement out of his house. One of the reasons he gives for advising against having guests in the house is that this will force the *pater familias* to give permission to the women of the household to go out of their building in order to make the necessary preparations for the guest—and then they will be seen by the guest, with the dire consequences mentioned earlier.[103]

Far more frequently, however, it is not the house but the castle which becomes a metaphor for the body in Kekaumenos. He devotes a long descriptive piece of advice on how to defend a cas-

[99] *Digenes*, 232.7-24.

[100] *Digenes*, 32.153-34.164; see also 30.99-102.

[101] *Digenes*, e.g. 26.29-39, 124.841-126.854, 42.297-30, 110.611-619; see also 50.111-129.

[102] *Digenes*, 166.86-168.89, 172.170-175.

[103] See notes 14, 15, above.

tle—with not only one, but two walls. 'Inspect daily your walls, inside and out, and also the gates', he says.[104] He illustrates with numerous examples how castles fell to the enemy; and these examples run parallel to the ones he gives concerning how the self may be attacked—through the gates of the senses. The mouth, for instance, becomes an avenue of attack through what comes out of it (words of persuasion which, coming out of the mouth of enemies, penetrate the castle—and disaster ensues);[105] but also, through what a man allows to go in it. For instance, just as the taking of too much food is bad for a person, so it is through the offer of food that Kekaumenos's own father took a castle in Greater Armenia: he offered to send the castle's *strategos* bread—and as soon as the *strategos* opened his gates to take in the bread, he lost his castle.[106]

Disaster also strikes through the ears. In the above example, by listening to the enemy's words the *strategos* lost his castle. In another example, the words of a Frankish leader were allowed to penetrate Malapetzes's castle and reach his niece's ears: she believed them; and it then became an easy task for the Franks to take the castle.[107] Again, once the words of 'Robert the Frank' reached the ears of 'Teras the Calabrian', he was done for—for he believed them, and was utterly destroyed.[108]

Touching is also to be eliminated. Just as touch between human beings is absent in Kekaumenos except within the context of evil (fornication, adultery, beating up of children),[109] so in terms of the

[104] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 29.27-28; ed. Litavrin, 176.13-14.

[105] Kekaumenos, e.g., ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 26.12-27.5; 28.9-31, 30.3-25, 35.1-18; ed. Litavrin, 168.29-170.23, 172.26-174.17, 176.20-178.10, 186.16-33.

[106] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 26.12-27.9; ed. Litavrin, 168.29-170.26.

[107] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 30.3-25; ed. Litavrin, 176.20-178.10.

[108] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 35.1-18; ed. Litavrin, 186.16-33.

[109] He advises against the latter: Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 53.32-54.1; ed. Litavrin, 226.9-10.

castle, it is houses attached to the walls that lead to the fall of the castle in two examples.[110]

And just as Kekaumenos's body is a closed space, so the castle must also be. Nothing must penetrate it; and nothing must get out of it. Kekaumenos warns that it is because they were persuaded to go out of the castle that Katakalon Klazomenites, and 'Teras the Calabrian', were destroyed;[111] it is because the *strategos* of Serbia went out of the castle to bathe, that Kekaumenos's grandfather took him and his castle;[112] it is because the Bulgar, Botkos, left his castle to fight outside it, that the Romaioi took it.[113] Instead, Kekaumenos advises, a man must gather everything—food, family, slaves, soldiers, horses—inside his castle, and keep them safely locked in there.[114] The parallel to this lies in the way in which Kekaumenos tried so hard to gather and keep everything he had in his own head—words, thoughts, secrets—behind the vigilantly guarded gates of his senses.

Conclusions

A crucial difference between Kekaumenos's *Precepts and Tales* and the Grottaferrata *Digenes Akrites* is located in the psychological mood which each work contains, and which it conveys to the reader. This difference of mood can be abstracted and reduced to one single binary opposition: that between Open Space (for *Digenes*) and Closed Space (for Kekaumenos), in and out of which movement is either easy and constant (*Digenes*) or frustrated and suppressed (Kekaumenos). This is, further, exemplified in the way each author expresses a distinct perception of Man in the world, symbolised through the diametrically opposed ways in which

[110] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 29.27-30.19, 33.29-34.33; ed. Litavrin, 176.13-178.4, 184.9-186.16.

[111] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 27.10-28.5, 35.1-18; ed. Litavrin, 170.26-172.25, 186.16-33.

[112] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 28.32-29.21; ed. Litavrin, 174.18-176.7.

[113] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 31.28-32.12; ed. Litavrin, 180.13-31.

[114] Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, 64.31-65.8; ed. Litavrin, 250.2-11.

each perceives and relates to the body's five senses, to Nature, and to the house or castle. The mood of openness in *Digenes* and of closeness in the *Precepts and Tales* operates in each case as a psycho-structural link: it provides each text with an element of internal continuity and gives it a measure of coherence—for each text remains, throughout all its passages, consistent in its conception of, and relation to, the perceived world.

This is not crucially important in the case of *Digenes*. As I have argued elsewhere, the author of the G (as opposed to other versions of) *Digenes Akrites* produced a text which achieves a high degree of internal structural coherence.[115] The psychological link on which this paper focused provides but one more example of this coherence. By contrast, in the case of Kekaumenos's text the psychological link becomes crucially important, because it is the *only* element to which the text remains true and consistent. If we ignore it, then the *Precepts and Tales* becomes a collection of unrelated, unconnected, haphazardly put-together groups of 'advice'. If we acknowledge it, then at least on one level, that of the personal perception of reality, the *Precepts and Tales* emerges as a very consistent testimony indeed. And indeed, Kekaumenos's text is, by contrast to *Digenes*, a very personal document. It is the deeply personal nature of Kekaumenos's text that makes it look like an 'heterogeneous' text, as Cyril Mango has called it.[116] If it is so difficult to find a single genre into which to slot Kekaumenos, this is because his text is above all a reflection of his own, internal world. We have become accustomed to the view that Kekaumenos's text is a mirror of society, that it portrays a common feeling that social order is bursting at the seams.[117] Yet the reading presented here

[115] See Galatariotou, 'Structural oppositions'; also Kastner, 'Narrative unity'.

[116] C. Mango, *Byzantium. The empire of new Rome* (London, 1980), 7.

[117] E.g. Angold, *The Byzantine empire*, 74-75; A. Kazhdan and G. Constable, *People and power in Byzantium. An introduction to modern Byzantine studies* (Washington, DC, 1982), 36, 144; Kazhdan, *Studies on Byzantine literature*, 172; but see also Kazhdan's emphasis on Kekaumenos's personality as a determining factor in the creation of the *Precepts and Tales*, e.g., Kazhdan and Constable, *People and power*, 26; A. Kazhdan and A. Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1985), 209.

suggests that on the contrary Kekaumenos's text portrays the feeling of a man that *he* is just about to burst at the seams: a feeling which, created within him because of his perception of the world as a threatening and punishing place, Kekaumenos then projected on the outside world. Kekaumenos's text is not so much a mirror of the world as a mirror of his own soul.

This, I hasten to add, is not to deny the existence of the 'factual' and social level of realities. Of course, castles existed and had to be defended; certainly, Kekaumenos lived in troubled times. And so the point that his text reflects external factual and social realities is well taken, and is indeed an indispensable point. Yet in the case of any text, factual and social realities necessarily coexist with the author's personal perception of reality. The extent to which the presence of the latter can be traced in each text differs, of course, very widely.[118] In the case under discussion here, the personal presence of the author of *Digenes* in his own text is absolutely minimal (it consists in effect of no more than whatever can be indirectly inferred from the fact alone that the unnamed author wrote this text). In total contrast, the personal presence of the author is overwhelming in the *Precepts and Tales*, Kekaumenos's subjective perception of the world having determined the preoccupations and the latent content of his text much more than did external factual and social realities.

Again, when it comes to literary influences on Kekaumenos, there is no doubt that they existed, and that they were clearly very important in determining the general shape and manifest content of Kekaumenos's text; but they were irrelevant in so far as the all-important *latent* content of his text was concerned. It would be tempting to see Kekaumenos as a man who above all became the perfect live illustration of the passage of John Chrysostom in which the human soul is visualised as a citadel which had to be constantly guarded against external attack, its weak points being five gates, corresponding to the five senses of the body.[119] I would

[118] For a discussion of this point, see my 'Travel and perception in Byzantium', *DOP*, 47 (1993), 221-291.

[119] John Chrysostom, *De inani gloria*, ed. A.M. Malingrey, para. 23 ff.; and see Mango, *Byzantium*, 224-5.

not dispute the power—conscious and unconscious—which this well known passage would have on someone like Kekaumenos. But Kekaumenos did not ultimately write the way he did because he had read John Chrysostom, any more than he wrote the way he did because he had read *florilegia*, military *taktika*, the Bible, apocryphal literature, Cassius Dio, or moralising works such as *Stephanites and Ichnelates*.[120] All such influences were accepted and used by Kekaumenos because they were traditional, conventional means of stylistic form and expression. Yet what Kekaumenos did (unconsciously, it seems) was to use these means to tell his sons and readers **about himself**, to communicate a description of his own internal world; thus to share it, and in the sharing to relieve the crushing loneliness and fear in which he lived. For the world, as Kekaumenos perceived it, was a dark, threatening, attacking place, in which all avenues of communication were also potential death traps. Whereas for *Digenes* the five senses were gates of Paradise, for Kekaumenos they were gates of Hell.[121]

[120] See G. Buckler, 'Writings familiar to Cecaumenos', *B*, 25 (1940-1941), 133-143; Roueché, 'Byzantine writers and readers'; and note Charlotte Roueché's contribution to *Alexios I Komnenos*, II (BBTT.4.2, Belfast, 1996).

[121] In this sense, in many ways Kekaumenos's perception of the world recalls above all the Christian symbolic universe in its most polarised form, as upheld mainly by monks and members of the secular Church. See generally Mango, *Byzantium*, 223-229; and especially Kazhdan's association of some of Kekaumenos's attitudes with those expressed by Symeon the New Theologian and Keroullarios: Kazhdan and Constable, *People and power*, 27-29; Kazhdan and Franklin, *Studies on Byzantine literature*, 172; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture*, 207-209.

15

Cappadocians at court: Digenes and Timarion

Roderick Beaton

The subject of this paper is two literary texts which stand at the head of the Komnenian revival of secular literature, but which are never normally considered together. The paper aims to establish the close relation of these two texts to the historical and cultural context of the early twelfth century. Both are literary fictions, both are anonymous, and both are known by the name of the principal character. Thereafter the overt similarities between them end. *Digenes Akrites* has been variously termed an epic or romance, or a mixture of both; *Timarion*, as its double title, *Timarion, or What Befell Him* declares, belongs to the genre of Lucianic satire. *Digenes* is in verse, draws on popular sources, and is almost certainly the first surviving work to have been written in a form of the medieval Greek vernacular; *Timarion* is in prose, draws extensively on Hellenistic, Byzantine and even some Roman literature, and is couched in the already archaic language of its model.[1]

[1] The principal editions of *Digenes* are: *Version* E: S. Alexiou, *Βασίλειος Διγενής Ακρίτης κατά το χειρόγραφο του Εσκοριάλ και το άσμα του Αρμούρη* (Athens, 1985), now revised and updated as *Βασίλειος Διγενής Ακρίτης καί τά ἄσματα του Αρμούρη καί τοῦ Γιοῦ του Ανδρονίκου* (Athens, 1990); and the bilingual edition by David Ricks, *Byzantine heroic poetry* (Bristol, 1990); *Version* G: J. Mavrogordato, *Digenes Akrites* (Oxford, 1956) (bilingual Greek/English text with commentary). *Synoptic edition* (now superseded in some respects)—E. Trapp, *Digenes Akrites, Synoptische Ausgabe der ältesten Versionen*, (WByzSt, 8, Vienna, 1971). On the genre of *Digenes* see also E. Trapp, 'Digenes Akrites, Epos oder Roman?' *Studi classici in onore di Quintino Cataudella*, II (1972), 637-643; R. Beaton, *The medieval Greek romance* (2nd ed., revised and expanded, London, 1996), ch. 3; and Alexiou, *Διγενής* (1990), 86-88. For the most recent

Digenes tells the story of the union of a daughter of the Doukas family with the Arab Emir of Syria, who converts to Christianity and comes over to the Romans (i.e. Byzantines) with all his followers. From this union is born the unparalleled hero, Basileios Digenes Akrites, called Digenes because he is born of two races, and Akrites, because his preferred domain turns out to be the no-man's-land of the frontier between the two. Digenes proves his manliness early on, first in hunting, then in the clearly related exploit of abducting a bride.[2] This achieved, the hero's main task is to fend off others with the same idea. Later he builds a splendid castle and palace for himself and his wife, where he falls ill and dies amid the lamentations of his retainers and of his wife, who at the end of the story falls lifeless upon his corpse.

The earliest literary form of the story has been lost, but its main lines are common to the two principal witnesses, the vernacular E version and the linguistically and rhetorically more elaborate G. Although its oral sources undoubtedly go back much further, the story assumes a knowledge of the eastern frontier as it was in the mid eleventh century, and so cannot have been composed in its written form before that date. In the other direction we have sound evidence that a vernacular version of the deeds of Digenes was

work on Digenes in its twelfth-century context see the essays edited by R. Beaton and D. Ricks, *Digenes Akrites: new approaches to Byzantine heroic poetry* (KCL, 2, Aldershot, 1993). For *Timarion* see R. Romano, *Pseudo-Luciano: Timarione* (Byz et Neo-Hell Neap, 2, Naples, 1974).

[2] The classic discussion of this theme by W. Entwistle, 'Bride-snatching and the "Deeds of Digenis"', *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, 4 (1953), 1-16, has been considerably updated by the following recent studies: C. Galatariotou, 'Structural oppositions in the Grottaferrata *Digenes Akrites*', *BMGS*, 11 (1987), 29-68; M. Angold, 'The wedding of Digenes Akrites: love and marriage in Byzantium in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *Πρακτικά του Α΄ Διεθνούς Συμποσίου: η Καθημερινή Ζωή στο Βυζάντιο* (*Κέντρο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών*, Athens, 1989), 201-205; P. Magdalino, 'Honour among Romaioi: the framework of social values in the world of Digenes Akrites and Kekaumenos', *BMGS*, 13 (1989), 183-218; D. Ricks, 'The pleasures of the chase: a motif in *Digenes Akrites*', *BMGS*, 13 (1989), 290-294; and P. Mackridge, '"None but the brave deserve the fair": abduction, elopement, seduction and marriage in the Escorial *Digenes Akrites* and Modern Greek heroic songs', *Digenes Akrites*, ed. Beaton and Ricks, 150-160.

known in Constantinople during the reign of Manuel I; and a parody of the same heroic style appears in a vernacular poem addressed to John, and so written before 1143. The latest editor of the E version, Stylianos Alexiou, has proposed a twelfth-century date, which is also supported by two historical allusions preserved only in that version. One is an allusion to the Assassins of Hims, which may have been inspired by a notorious murder there in 1102-3, the other, less certainly, mentions the Abbasid Caliph Mustarshid of the twelfth century.[3]

Although the 'hard' evidence for a twelfth-century date for *Digenes* is scanty, the very possibility of such a date forces us to consider *where* the poem was written. Mavrogordato, who edited the G version, assumed, with most other commentators, that the answer was the frontier region where the oral sources of the poem must have been current in the eleventh century; and on this basis proposed a guess that '*Digenes* was written during the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos (1042-54), during which "almost complete peace reigned on the frontier of Syria and Mesopotamia"'.[4] Alexiou, arguing for a date in the early twelfth century, is vaguer about the place.[5] But if Mavrogordato is right, there is nothing in either the historical circumstances of the region or in the literary interests of the time, during the heyday of Psellos, to explain the motivation of a writer in suddenly producing a relatively large-scale literary composition, on a secular theme, in an unprecedented linguistic idiom.

Before 1071 and the subsequent loss of most of Anatolia, there existed no pressing reason, either in the eastern empire or any-

[3] Alexiou, *Διγενής* (1985), lviii, xcix and *Διγενής* (1990), 54-56. Another murder involving the Assassins is described by Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, VI.xii.5-6, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols (Paris, 1937-1945), II, 77, tr. E.R.A. Sewter (Harmondsworth, 1988), 208-209. This evidence for the dating of E has now been challenged by historians, although the evidence is by no means conclusive on either side (see P. Magdalino, '*Digenes Akrites* and Byzantine literature: the twelfth-century background to the Grottaferrata version', *Digenes Akrites*, ed. Beaton and Ricks, 1-14; C. Galatariotou, 'The primacy of the Escorial *Digenes Akrites*: an open and shut case?', *Digenes Akrites*, ed. Beaton and Ricks, 38-54).

[4] Mavrogordato, *Digenes*, lxxxiv.

[5] Alexiou, *Διγενής* (1985), ci; *Διγενής* (1990), 58-59.

where else, for giving literary form to the oral traditions of this or any other region. After that date, and in the capital, several factors converge which would explain the genesis of such an innovative literary text. First of all there was a strong motivation, for a generation of displaced persons and their immediate descendants, to give permanent form to a heroic tradition now faced with extinction. In comparable circumstances in later times this need and its literary manifestation are well documented: in the poems and novels of exiles from the 1922 debacle, such as George Seferis, George Theotokas and Kosmas Politis; and very possibly also in the upsurge in the copying of vernacular Greek manuscripts in the seventy or so years after 1453. Secondly, by the end of the eleventh century, secular writing in the fields of philosophy and historiography, and awareness of Hellenistic secular literature, had reached new levels of sophistication at Constantinople. These experiments were to continue in the Komnenian period with the revival of the secular genres of satire and romance, and with the first appearance of the vernacular at the imperial court in poems addressed first to John and then to Manuel Komnenos. To these two factors, which could only have come together after the defeat at Manzikert, may be added a third: the strong emphasis given by Alexios and his Komnenian successors to the martial virtues exemplified by the deeds of Digenes.[6]

The chronological limits within which such a convergence could have taken place give us, I believe, the most secure dating for the original composition of *Digenes*: long enough after 1071 for the impact of the loss of Anatolia to have made itself felt and for the tales and songs brought by those displaced to have made some popular impact in the capital, but not so long after for the oral tradition of pre-1071 to have become attenuated. The argument leads inexorably to the latter part of the reign of Alexios, and Constantinople itself.[7] It is certainly encouraging that the most

[6] Our understanding of these developments is now greatly extended and enhanced by the analysis of the literary and rhetorical evidence for the whole twelfth century, by Magdalino, *Empire*.

[7] The suggestion that the poem was composed in Constantinople was first made by Nicolas Oikonomidès, 'L'épopée de Digénis et la frontière orientale de Byzance aux Xe et XIe siècles', *TM*, 7 (1979), 397. The possibility has been

convincing of the datable realia of the E version discussed by Alexiou, the reference to the Assassins of Hims, also points to a date not long after 1102-3.

Timarion, although very different from *Digenes*, is also in literary terms a puzzling text. Ostensibly in the form of a dialogue, after the manner of Lucian, it is in effect a first-person narrative by the main character Timarion to his friend Kydion. The setting for this imaginary dialogue is Constantinople, where Timarion has just returned from the unusual journey that he now proceeds to recount to his friend. The narrative falls into two unequal parts, and commentators have been puzzled at the lack of connection between the two. In the first Timarion visits the city of Thessalonike, and uses all the tricks of the rhetorical 'genre' of *ekphrasis* to describe the splendours of the annual festivities in honour of St Demetrios. In the sequel, our hero falls ill on the way back to Constantinople. While lying apparently at death's door in a Thracian inn, he is prematurely kidnapped by the flunkies of an underworld that seems largely pagan, and held there for four days. During his stay in the underworld Timarion meets a number of named characters, most of whom had been active in the late eleventh century. In order to bring about his release, he enlists the help of his old teacher, Theodore of Smyrna, whose vice of gluttony is presented with sympathetic humour, in pleading his case before the judges of the underworld. In a protracted trial scene, the case turns upon Timarion's precise medical condition at the moment when he was abducted from the land of the living; and the anonymous author has a field day at the expense of both the legal and medical professions. All is well eventually, however, and the story ends back where it started, with Timarion's arrival at Constantinople.

The date of this anonymous text has generally been assigned rather vaguely to the first half of the twelfth century. I suspect that the only reason for considering so late a date as the mid-century is

further canvassed by Angold, *Byzantine empire*, 218-219; M. Mullett, 'Aristocracy and patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople', *The Byzantine aristocracy*, ed. Angold, 180; Beaton, *The medieval Greek romance*, ch. 3; and Magdalino, '*Digenes Akrites* and Byzantine literature', 8.

the scarcity of putative authors in the earlier period; and much of the discussion of this text has centred on the question of authorship. The names of Theodore Prodromos, Nicholas Kallikles and Michael Italikos have all been canvassed, but inconclusively.[8] If we leave aside the question of authorship, the internal evidence of the text itself points overwhelmingly to the second decade of the twelfth century. All the historical figures from the recent past who are named in the text were active between the 1060s and the turn of the century, and the author would have had to be old enough to have known most of them. Of the characters encountered by Timarion in the underworld the last to die must have been Theodore of Smyrna, whose death is variously put at 1106 or shortly after 1112.[9]

According to the story, Theodore had been the teacher of the fictional hero Timarion, and there are indications that the latter's visit to the underworld takes place a few years afterwards. If *Timarion* was written much later than the death of Alexios, however, its topical allusions would already have lost their topicality, nor could the writer have had any direct knowledge of most of the real people that he describes. On the other hand the intriguing suggestion has been made by Evdoxos Tsolakis that the text, almost certainly by a pupil of Theodore, was written while the master was still alive.[10] This solution is not incompatible with the humour of the piece, and would bring the time of writing closer to the heyday of the eleventh-century cast of characters. It would also explain

[8] For Prodromos see H. Hunger, *Der byzantinische Katz-Mäuse Krieg* (Graz-Vienna-Cologne, 1968), 61-64, and W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos, historische Gedichte* (WByzSt, 11, Vienna, 1974), 64. For Kallikles see R. Romano, *Timarione*, 25-31, and R. Romano, *Nicola Callicle, carmi* (Naples, 1980), 27-28. For Italikos see B. Baldwin, 'The authorship of the Timarion', *BZ*, 77 (1984), 233-237, and B. Baldwin, *Timarion, translated with an introduction and commentary* (Detroit, 1984).

[9] See L. Clucas, *The trial of John Italos and the crisis of intellectual values in Byzantium in the eleventh century*. (MiscByzMonac, 26, Munich, 1981), 4; and H.-G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* (Munich, 1959), 617.

[10] E. Tsolakis, 'Τιμαρίων: μια νέα ανάγνωση', *Μνήμη Σ. Καρατζά, Επιστημονική Επετηρίδα Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης* (1990), 109-118.

why none of those described as very recently dead are named: the story is projected some years into the future from the time when it was written, and might on this reading have been written during the **first** decade of the twelfth century.

The risqué, even subversive, side of this satire had already begun to attract attention in the early fourteenth century, when Constantine Akropolites recommended the book for burning.[11] More recently Roberto Romano, whose 1974 edition and Italian translation remain standard but almost unobtainable, has interpreted the work as 'anti-conformist and paganising', a 'monument of Byzantine lay humanism';[12] and Margaret Alexiou has detected signs of subtly subversive irony in the descriptions of Thessalonike and its unnamed *doux*.[13] But here the undoubted originality of such a piece of writing in the twelfth century has distracted attention from the strongly traditional basis of the satire. Nor is the attitude shown in the text to prominent characters of the late eleventh century out of key with Komnenian orthodoxy. Among the philosophers, Psellos and Italos, representatives of the 'intellectual' faction in late eleventh-century politics, are treated to vicious invective, while Theodore of Smyrna, who replaced Italos as Consul of the Philosophers after the condemnation of the latter in 1082, is presented as Timarion's mentor and treated with affection. Finally the loser of the battle of Manzikert, and the representative of the 'military' faction at the time, the emperor Romanos IV Diogenes, is presented in an uncharacteristically sympathetic light, blinded and (uniquely according to this text) even poisoned by his pernicious enemies at home (ch. 22).

The portrayal of Romanos also provides the principal link between this text and *Digenes*. The shade of the defeated emperor is introduced in a vivid description, and identified to the narrator with the words:

> οὗτος ἐστὶν ὁ ἐκ Καππαδόκης περιώνυμος Διογενής (ch. 22).

[11] For text and discussion of Akropolites's letter see Romano, *Timarione*, 42-45.

[12] Romano, *Timarione*, 20, 29.

[13] M. Alexiou, 'Literary subversion and the aristocracy in twelfth-century Byzantium: a stylistic analysis of the *Timarion* (ch. 6-10)', *BMGS*, 8 (1982-1983), 29-45.

The accentuation of Romanos's family name here is unique, and has been noted, but not explained, by the most recent editor of the text.[14] It is now accepted that the fictional name Digenes (Διγενής) does not derive from Diogenes (Διογένης); and it would be far-fetched indeed to propose Romanos IV as the real-life prototype for that hero. On the other hand, to pronounce the name of the emperor in this way is surely to honour his memory by deliberate allusion to the heroic exploits of the legendary hero of the eastern frontier, and this allusion gains additional force from the reference to Romanos's place of origin, Cappadocia. Digenes is also described, in a similar pattern of words, as Cappadocian:

Ὁ θαυμαστὸς Καππάδοκας Βασίλειος Ἀκρίτης.[15]

This is not the only link between the two literary texts. *Digenes*, like the *doux* of Thessalonike described in *Timarion*, is descended from the Doukas family. In *Digenes*, it is the hero's mother (in the G version also his wife) who is a Doukaina, and marriages are made in that poem in a manner that confirms the aggressive superiority of the male. Curiously, in *Timarion*, it is again the mother of the *doux* who is described as a descendant of the 'legendary Doukai', and the manner of her wooing is, as Margaret Alexiou has observed, 'not untinged by Akritic bride-snatching'.[16] Once again, it seems likely that the author of *Timarion* knew *Digenes*; but it is striking in any case that in both texts the Doukas family is presented in precisely the role that it actually played in the imperial family during Alexios's reign. Alexios, in marrying a Doukaina, gained the somewhat uneasy support of a pówerful, and potentially rival, faction (*Al.*, III.ii). The insertion of the family name of Doukas into the traditional story material of *Digenes* is less likely to be due to the patronage of that family in the eleventh century, as the folklorist Stilpon Kryiakidis supposed,[17] than to anxiety

[14] Romano, *Timarione*, 137.
[15] E 1092; cf. G VII 1-2, 112.
[16] Alexiou, 'Literary subversion', 43.
[17] See Mavrogordato, *Digenes*, lxvi-lxvii for bibliography and comment.

about the role of the Doukai in the early years of the Komnenian dynasty.

These points of contact between the two texts, small though they are, serve as pointers to a more fundamental similarity of outlook. I have already argued that an underlying theme of *Digenes* is nostalgia for a lost frontier homeland. *Timarion* invites a similar reading. Not only were many of the principal characters presented in the underworld active around the time of the defeat of Manzikert; the fictional Timarion is a refugee from his homeland, probably of the second generation. On arrival in Thessalonike he describes himself as a stranger, explaining not that he has just come from Constantinople, but that he is a 'Cappadocian **from beyond the frontier**'(ch. 5). Timarion hails from the same lost province as the legendary Digenes and the real Romanos. And the hero's whole diversion to the underworld, it emerges in the trial scene, has been the consequence of his being a ξένος, with no one to pay for the customary obsequies for the dead (ch.39). The text of *Timarion* is a backward look by a displaced person at the historical circumstances surrounding the loss of his homeland—and one which is entirely consistent with the Komnenian 'party line'.[18]

If these links between the two texts and between each and the historical and literary context of Constantinople during the latter part of Alexios's reign are accepted, then the following conclusions emerge. First, the literary composition of *Digenes* is to be placed in Constantinople, and not much more than a generation after 1071. This best explains its implicitly nostalgic relation to its oral sources, as well as its probable influence on literary developments at court from the last years of the reign of John II onwards. *Timarion*, though a very different kind of text, is no less the product of fusion between literary developments of the same period, on the one hand, and the impact of historical events, on the other. *Timarion* is unlikely to have been written later than the death of Alexios, and probably dates from the last few years of his reign, although it could conceivably date as far back as c. 1100. Its author knew *Digenes*, which is therefore the earlier of the two texts, but not necessarily by much. Whether or not a more exact chronology can be

[18] Compare *Al.* XI.x.1-9, L, III, 42-46, S, 360-364.

established, the discovery of a more precise historical and literary context for these two texts should help to set the stage for the remarkable literary developments and achievements which took place under Alexios's successors John and Manuel Komnenos.

16

The art and architecture of Alexios I Komnenos

Lyn Rodley

The topic of art and architecture associated with Alexios I is not at first glance one that cries out for treatment, for neither material remains nor documentary sources yield much that can be attributed to him. This negative point is itself of interest, however, since it makes the long reign of Alexios unusual when viewed against the background of the art patronage of other middle Byzantine emperors. From the end of iconoclasm in 842 to the usurpation of Alexios in 1081, many emperors were significant patrons of the arts, in various ways and for a variety of reasons, but with some common threads to their patronage. Thus, the *Life* of Basil I (867-886) tells us that he built or restored a large number of churches, and gives detailed, laudatory descriptions of some of the work done. Many commissions were in Constantinople and included the restoration of Hagia Sophia and Holy Apostles and the building of the Nea Ekklesia in the palace, an opulent church the construction of which Basil is said to have supervised himself.[1] Basil's patronage of the minor arts is more difficult to document, but at least one fine illuminated manuscript was made for him—Paris B.N. gr. 510, the homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos.[2] Basil's son Leo VI (886-912) added chapels of St Anna and St Barbara to the impe-

[1] Theophanes Continuatus, ed. I. Bekker (CSHB, Bonn, 1838), 321-341; C. Mango, *The art of the Byzantine empire 312-1453* (Sources and documents in the history of art, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1972), 192-199.

[2] I. Spatharakis, *Corpus of dated illuminated Greek manuscripts to the year 1453* (Leiden, 1981), no.4.

rial palace, redecorated the church of the Theotokos of Pege and added to it another chapel of St Anna.[3] His concern with the visual arts is also indicated by the sermons he wrote which use formal descriptions (*ekphraseis*) of churches as the starting point for theological meditations.[4] Leo's son Constantine VII (913-955) was perhaps the most conspicuous middle Byzantine imperial patron of the arts, collecting statues, restoring the hall of the nineteen couches in the imperial palace, building palaces for his son Romanos ('more than any previous emperor'), restoring the church of St Paul in the palace and supplying it with new mosaics, and personally supervising painters, builders, stone carvers and metalworkers (whose response to this interest is unrecorded).[5] Romanos I, Constantine's co-emperor between 920-944, turned his palace at the Myrelaion into a monastery, one function of which was to provide a place of burial for himself and his family.[6] The palace was built above a fifth-century rotunda which formed a cistern-substructure for it; at the change of function, a brick inscribed-cross church with a narthex was built alongside it.[7] Church, cistern/rotunda and part of the palace platform remain, providing useful and rare material evidence of the appearance and scale of a middle Byzantine imperial commission. The church is small (16x10 metres in exterior dimensions) and has a substructure of similar form and size to bring it to the level of the palace. Both the inscribed-cross plan and the small size of the church are typical of middle Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture, in which opulence was generally expressed not by grandeur but by the use of expensive interior decoration: marble wall-cladding and floors, gold mosaic decoration and facings of precious metals, ivory and enamel for furnishings.[8] None of this remains at the Myrelaion church,

[3] Theoph. Cont., 146, 335, tr. Mango, *Sources*, 164; AASS, Nov. III, 878-889, tr. Mango, *Sources*, 205.
[4] Mango, *Sources*, 202-205.
[5] Theoph. Cont., 447-448, tr. Mango, *Sources*, 207-8.
[6] R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, III, *Les églises et les monastères*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1969), 351-354.
[7] L. Striker, *The Myrelaion (Bodrum Camii) in Istanbul* (Princeton, NJ, 1981).
[8] R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine architecture*, 2nd ed. (Harmondsworth 1975), 362-363.

which was a brick shell until recent restoration for use as a mosque.

The level of imperial patronage appears to diminish with Basil II (976-1025), possibly because he was so often absent from the capital on campaign, but also because he was apparently of austere disposition, preferring to hoard wealth in specially constructed underground chambers rather than spend it on ostentatious buildings.[9] He may nevertheless have been responsible for adding a monastery to the church of St Mokios, substantially restored a century earlier by Basil I, and he is credited by some authors with building or restoring St John of Hebdomon, the monastery in which he was buried.[10] Two well-known illuminated manuscripts were made for him, a Psalter (Venice Marc. gr. 17) and a Menologion (Vat. gr. 1613), but whether commissioned by him or by patrons who presented them as gifts, is uncertain.[11]

The great fortune left by Basil provided his successors with the means to embark upon a new wave of imperial patronage, one aspect of which was usually the founding of monasteries to serve as mausolea, like Romanos I's Myrelaion. Until this time, the traditional place of burial for emperors and their families had been the church of Holy Apostles, but Basil's brother Constantine VIII (1025-1028) was the last emperor to be laid to rest there and, as we have seen, Romanos I and Basil himself had already chosen burial elsewhere.[12] After the brief reign of Constantine VIII the throne was occupied by the successive husbands of his daughter Zoe. Romanos III, the first of these, built the monastery of the Theotokos Peribleptos in which he was buried in 1034.[13] Michael Psellos complains that this was a severe drain on the royal treasury, and a fifteenth-century description confirms that both church and

[9] Michael Psellos, *Χρονογραφία*, I.xxx-xxxii, ed. E. Renauld, *Chronographie*, 2 vols (Paris, 1926-1928), I, 18-20, tr. E.R.A. Sewter, *Fourteen Byzantine rulers* (Harmondsworth, 1966), 44-46.
[10] Janin, *Géographie*, 354-356, 267-268.
[11] Spatharakis, *Corpus*, nos. 35 and 43.
[12] P. Grierson, 'The tombs and obits of the Byzantine emperors 337-1042', *DOP*, 16 (1962), 59.
[13] Janin, *Géographie*, 218.

refectory were richly decorated with fine marbles and mosaics.[14] Romanos III also undertook major restoration work at several sites in Constantinople, including Hagia Sophia and the church of the Theotokos of Blachernai, and began to rebuild the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.[15] Zoe's second husband, Michael IV, made provision for his burial by restoring the monastery of SS Kosmas and Damian, beyond the Theodosian wall, probably on the hillside of what is now Eyüp.[16] Psellos describes Michael as surpassing all his predecessors in the workmanship and splendour of this church, praising its marble floors and panelling, gold mosaic and painting.[17] Several important commissions are attributed to Zoe's third husband, Constantine IX (1042-1054). Away from the capital he continued the work on the church of the Holy Sepulchre started by Romanos III and built the Nea Mone on Chios, the church of which survives, an octagon-domed building with fine mosaic decoration and marble panelling.[18] His chief commission in Constantinople was the monastery of St George in the Mangana district near the sea wall, a complex of which only the substructures remain.[19] The church, which later sources describe as being richly embellished with mosaic and polychrome marbles, called forth a charge of extravagance from Psellos, because Constantine apparently built one church and then demolished it to build a larger one, with 'gold flowing from the public treasury'.[20] The monastery was Constantine's burial place when he died in 1055. Zoe, who died shortly before him, was buried in her own funerary church, Christ Antiphonetes, possibly in the neighbourhood of

[14] Psellos, III.xv, ed. Renauld, I, 42-43, tr. Sewter, 72; F. López Estrada, *Embajada a Tamorlán* (Madrid, 1943), 37-40, tr. Mango, *Sources*, 217-218.
[15] Janin, *Géographie*, 162, 459; C. Coüasnon, *The church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem* (London, 1974), 20.
[16] Janin, *Géographie*, 287.
[17] Psellos, IV.xxxi, ed. Renauld, I, 71-72, tr. Sewter, 105-106.
[18] Coüasnon, *Holy Sepulchre*, 20; C. Bouras, *Nea Moni on Chios. History and architecture* (Athens, 1982).
[19] Janin, *Géographie*, 70-71; R. Demangel and E. Mamboury, *Le quartier des Manganes et la première région de Constantinople* (Paris, 1939).
[20] Psellos, VI.clxxxv, ed. Renauld, II, 61-64, tr. Sewter, 250-252. Cf. n. 17 above—Psellos is not consistent in his attitude to luxury.

Hagia Sophia.[21] Psellos says that the tomb was surrounded by small columns which were plated with silver (perhaps an arcosolium with attached pilasters, or a free-standing sarcophagus within a peristyle). Oblique confirmation that it was an opulent monument comes from Anna Komnene, who admits that the gold and silver ornament of Zoe's tomb was among the church treasure gathered by Alexios to finance his military campaigns, a notorious activity to be discussed below.[22] Little record of artistic patronage has been left by the series of brief reigns during the twenty-five years that followed the demise of Constantine IX, but we do hear that Isaac Komnenos (1057-1059) built the church of St Thekla, at great expense, and Nikephoros III Botaneiates (1078-1081) made alterations to the Theotokos Peribleptos in preparation for his burial there.[23]

The evidence included in this brief survey of middle Byzantine imperial patronage up to the time of Alexios I is far too fragmentary to be the subject of secure statistical analysis. Only a dozen middle Byzantine buildings of Constantinople survive, and in most cases their patronage and dates of construction are unknown or uncertain; more can be added from the documentary record, but this too is far from complete. Nevertheless, it can be said that for most of those emperors who had reigns of ten years or more, and for several with much shorter terms, some record of artistic patronage can be found, particularly for monasteries housing imperial tombs. The accounts often include *ekphraseis* that are as conventional as they are imprecise, noting the high-quality workmanship, the splendid whiteness (or splendid polychromy) of marble floors and wall claddings, sumptuous mosaic and painting, and other expensive materials. Even Psellos's criticism of the extravagance of Constantine IX falls into this conventional language of praise, as he admires the results of the profligacy he condemns. Crediting the patron with personal involvement in the design was

[21] Janin, *Géographie*, 506.
[22] Psellos, VI.clxxxiv, ed. Renauld, II, 61, tr. Sewter, 250; Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, VI.iii, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols (Paris, 1937-1945), II, 46, tr. E.R.A. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1988), 185.
[23] Janin, *Géographie*, 141, 218.

probably also a *topos* in most cases, a sycophantic exaggeration of the patron's interest in the progress of his commission.

We find no such claims for Alexios I, whose long and relatively stable reign appears to have left no *ekphraseis* of fine buildings with opulent decoration commissioned by the emperor. The only undertaking mentioned in the chief source for Alexios I, the *Alexiad* written by his daughter Anna, is a complex known as the *Orphanotropheion* in the acropolis of Constantinople, which is described in quite different terms and will be discussed below. Other sources yield three attributions of patronage by Alexios: the monastery of Christ Philanthropos, where Alexios was buried, the monastery of St Mokios and the Blachernai palace. The only certain evidence of Alexios as patron of the minor arts is a single illuminated manuscript, a copy of the *Panoplia Dogmatike* (Vat. gr. 666), a treatise against all heresies commissioned by Alexios from the monk Euthymios Zigabenos.[24] This manuscript contains two images of Alexios, one showing him standing with covered hands to receive scrolls offered by nine church fathers (the guardians of Orthodoxy) painted on the opposite page; in the other he presents the book to Christ. The Vatican manuscript may have been the presentation copy made for Alexios, but this is not quite certain, since the images also mark Alexios's role as commissioner of the work itself and not necessarily the particular copy. Similar iconography appears, in fact, in a later copy which could not have been Alexios's own. [25]

Uncertainty also attaches to the level of Alexios's involvement in the three buildings mentioned above. First, although Niketas Choniates says that Alexios's body was taken to the church of Christ Philanthropos 'which he built', there is other evidence that

[24] Spatharakis, *Corpus*, no. 126. Conjecture has associated Alexios with the Barberini Psalter (Vat.Barb.gr. 372) and with the altar frontal known as the Pala d'Oro, in San Marco, Venice, but neither case is convincing, I. Spatharakis, *The portrait in Byzantine illuminated manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), 26ff.; S. Bettini, 'Venice, the Pala d'Oro, and Constantinople', *The treasury of San Marco, Venice* (Milan, 1984), 48.

[25] Moscow Hist. Mus. Synodal 387, of the second half of the twelfth century. Spatharakis, *The portrait*, 128-129.

this church belonged to a foundation of his wife, Eirene.[26] Christ Philanthropos was part of a double monastery, probably in the Blachernai district; the other part, for women, was dedicated to the Theotokos Kecharitomene and its *typikon* survives.[27] This document establishes that Eirene was certainly the founder of the women's house, and its several references to Christ Philanthropos make it likely that she was responsible for the entire foundation. While he doubtless had some involvement with the double monastery during his lifetime, it would appear possible that Alexios, who was much given to delegating administrative responsibility to the women of his family, left his wife to arrange his place of burial. It is not unlikely that Choniates, writing in the late twelfth century, assumed Christ Philanthropos to be Alexios's own commission because it was a Komnenian foundation and the one in which Alexios was buried.

The monastery of Mokios appears, as noted above, to have been a foundation of Basil II incorporating the early Christian church of St Mokios, which had been rebuilt by Justinian between 518 and 527 and restored by Basil I. A role for Alexios in the patronage of this monastery is claimed in an epigram describing an image in the monastery refectory, a wall-painting (or possibly mosaic) showing four emperors.[28] These were Basil II, the founder, Alexios, who installed a community of monks and provided abundantly for their needs, his son John II, who also gave abundantly, and grandson Manuel I, who gave even more abundantly than the others, built the refectory and repaired the church roof (an important undertaking, costing one hundred pounds of gold). It may be significant that while the epigram gives specific details of Manuel's contribution to the fabric of the monastery, it is vague about the 'abundant' benefactions of John and Alexios. It is likely, therefore, that neither of these two was responsible for substantial building or decora-

[26] Niketas Choniates, *Ἱστορία*, ed. I. Bekker (CSHB, Bonn, 1835), 12; Janin, *Géographie*, 525-527; 'Les monastères du Christ Philanthrope', *EB*, 4 (1946), 135-162, 135-140.

[27] F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana* (6 vols, Vienna, 1860-1890), V. 372, 380, 383.

[28] S. Lampros, ' Ὁ Μαρκιανὸς κῶδιξ 524', *Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων*, 8 (1911), 113-192, at 117-118 (misprinted as 127-128), tr. Mango, *Sources*, 226.

tion, but that their donations were of money or land. The epigram is one of several in a collection made during the reign of Manuel and largely concerned with representations of this emperor that, like the St Mokios image, were clearly intended to show Manuel's pedigree, not just as the most recent of the Komnenoi, but as worthy inheritor of the throne of other great emperors such as Basil II.[29] The wish to include a continuous line of Komnenian patrons in such a context may therefore be the main reason for the inclusion of Alexios and John in the Mokios image, and might have been justified by minor patronage of the monastery.

The third building commission attributed to Alexios concerns the Blachernai palace, one phase of which Janin calls 'the Palace of Alexios'.[30] The Blachernai palace was built against the north end of the Theodosian land wall, overlooking the Golden Horn—the only material remains of it are substructures embedded in the wall, and a three-storey building (Tekfur Sarayi) added during the Palaiologan period.[31] The palace seems to have been begun in the fifth or early sixth century as a suite of chambers serving imperial parties making visits to the important church of the Theotokos of Blachernai, which housed the veil of the Virgin. By the mid-eleventh century there was a fortified palace complex on the site, being used as an occasional imperial residence, and therefore supplementing the old imperial palace next to Hagia Sophia. By the Palaiologan period, the Blachernai palace had become the chief imperial residence, a move for which the Komnenoi were largely responsible. A synod of 1094 (of which more below) met in the 'renovated' great triclinium of the Blachernai palace, a hall which was probably that referred to by Pachymeres and other Palaiologan authors

[29] P. Magdalino and R. Nelson, 'The emperor in Byzantine art of the twelfth century', *ByzForsch*, 8 (1982), 123-83, 173.

[30] R. Janin, *Constantinople Byzantin* (Paris, 1950), 125; 'c'est un fait certain qu'Alexis Comnène construisit dans ce quartier [Blachernai] un palais où il reçut les chefs de la première croisade'—but *Al.*, X.x, L, II, 226-230, S, 323-326, cited as source, says nothing of the building of the palace.

[31] A. Van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople* (London, 1899), 109-114.

as the 'triclinium of Alexios'.[32] Apart from the record of the synod, no contemporary source places work on the palace in Alexios's reign, not even the *Alexiad*, as noted above. A substantial palace was certainly already in place before the reign of Alexios, since he and his brother Isaac repaired to it at the outset of their usurpation, before leaving the capital to assemble their forces—it was an easily defensible site conveniently close to a city gate. Alexios's contribution to the fabric of the Blachernai palace may therefore have been little more than redecoration of the great triclinium.[33]

The above is not an attempt to deny that Alexios was a patron of the monasteries of Christ Philanthropos and Mokios, nor of the Blachernai palace; rather it is to point out that his involvement may have been minor in some, or even in all three cases. Whatever its level, it seems not to have been made the subject of formal praise in the traditional manner. Given the fragmentary survival of Byzantine sources, of course, the absence of panegyric on the topic of Alexios's patronage might mean nothing more than that the documents containing it have failed to survive. In the case of Alexios, however, we have, in the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene, exactly the kind of vehicle in which we would expect to find admiring references to its subject's patronage of architecture and the arts. The *Alexiad* gives a full account of the life of Alexios from boyhood to death, covering his usurpation, his campaigns against enemies of the empire on several fronts, his dealings with enemies, allies, and heretics, his civil and military administration. It praises the conduct of Alexios in all of these contexts and in almost every conceivable way, but it does not identify him as a significant patron of the arts or architecture, an omission that invites inquiry.

This is particularly the case since the *Alexiad* does not ignore material culture altogether, and several opportunities for the introduction of *ekphraseis* offer themselves, but are not taken up. Thus Anna often mentions buildings to locate events, but does not

[32] P. Gautier, 'Le synode des Blachernes (fin 1094). Étude prosopographique', *REB*, 29 (1971), 214-284, 215; for Palaiologan sources, Magdalino and Nelson, 'The emperor in Byzantine art', 141 n. 36.

[33] There were four triclinia in the fifth-/sixth-century complex; it is not clear from the sources whether the 'great triclinium' was one of these or another building; Janin, *Constantinople*, 124-125.

pause to describe them or record her father's role as a patron. She makes several references to the Blachernai palace, for example, but says nothing of the renovation of the great triclinium.[34] She also records that Alexios commissioned the *Panoplia Dogmatike* from Zigabenos, but does not mention a luxurious copy like Vat. gr. 666 which, if not Alexios's own copy, was surely modelled on one such.[35] The absence of *ekphraseis* in the *Alexiad* cannot be accounted for merely by assuming that Anna was herself without interest in material culture. The biographer must often cover subjects that he (or she) finds less than compelling, and a well-educated writer like Anna cannot have been ignorant of the literary conventions of her day; we might expect her to use all available formulae appropriate to praise of her father. Indeed, her familiarity with formal praise of buildings does emerge in just one instance, where she speaks of the church of St Thekla in the Blachernai palace built by Alexios's uncle Isaac, 'at considerable expense, with magnificent decorations and works of art'.[36] The reference to St Thekla appears in Anna's description of Alexios's mother, Anna Dalassene, who often worshipped there. This prompts Anna to explain that Isaac Komnenos built the church in thanksgiving for what he perceived as miraculous delivery from death during a campaign against the Pechenegs: in a storm on St Thekla's day, he was sheltering under a tree but was moved to leap away from it just before it fell. The main attraction of the tale for Anna is doubtless that it demonstrates divine approval of the Komnenoi, and the reference to the cost and splendour of the church was probably simply copied from her source for the 'miracle', perhaps a *Life* of Isaac, or an *ekphrasis* of the church of St Thekla. Anna does not, however, use such formulae when speaking of works associated with Alexios himself. Thus, when Anna tells us that her father created the title *sebastokrator* for his brother Isaac, and describes the crowns to be worn by emperor, *sebastokrator* and caesar for ceremonial occasions, it is with the prosaic detail of a modern catalogue entry: the

[34] *Al.*, II.v.2, L, I, 76, S, 83; *Al.*, II.vi.1, L, I, 79-80, S, 86; *Al.*, VI.iii.2, L, II, 46, S, 184; *Al.*, X.ix.3, L, II, 221, S, 319; *Al.*, XII.vii.1, L, III, 75, S, 386.
[35] *Al.*, XV.ix.1, L, III, 223, S, 500.
[36] *Al.*, III.viii.8-11, L, I, 128-130, S, 123-124; Janin, *Géographie*, 141.

imperial crown is a close-fitting hemisphere, decorated with pearls and stones, some inset and others hanging from its sides; the crowns of *sebastokrator* and caesar are not helmet-shaped and have fewer jewels and pearls.[37] Anna's purpose is to clarify the insignia of rank—she does not refer to either the value or opulent appearance of such headgear. A little further on, Anna describes Alexios's feelings of personal responsibility for the problems of the empire and his dismissal of majesty, power, the royal purple, the bejewelled crown and jewel-encrusted robes as worthless, compared with the welfare of the empire.[38] The reference to imperial dress is of course a metaphor by which Anna attempts to to remove all notion of personal ambition from Alexios's usurpation. It nevertheless suggests that aversion to ostentatious display was, if not a real aspect of Alexios's personality, at least a public image he was anxious to promote, one that begins to account for Anna's avoidance of conventional references to lavish patronage in the *Alexiad*.

This direction becomes clearer still when the history of 'Alexios and the church treasure' emerges.[39] According to Anna, when Alexios was about to embark on a campaign against the Normans, he found the imperial treasury empty, its wealth drained by Nikephoros III. His alternatives, she says, were either to abandon the empire in despair, or to gather the resources he needed as best he could. The immediate family and its loyal friends rallied round, sending in their gold and silver, but it was not enough. Anna Dalassene and Isaac (with prudent foresight, it seems) then examined 'ancient laws and canons' and discovered that it was considered legitimate to use church treasure to ransom prisoners of war—a status Anna then accords to all Christians threatened by enemies. A 'small quantity' of church valuables was then gathered in, and Anna and Isaac obtained the approval of the holy synod for the action. She admits that there was opposition, especially from a bishop, Leo of Chalcedon, who objected particularly to the stripping of gold and silver from the doors of the Theotokos Chalko-

[37] *Al.*, III.iv.1, L, I, 113-114, S, 111.
[38] *Al.*, III.v.2, L, II, 117, S, 114.
[39] *Al.*, V.i.4-ii.6, L, II, 8-13, S, 156-160; *Al.*, VI.iii, L, II, 45-48, S, 184-186.

prateia, near Hagia Sophia. (Anna dismisses Leo briskly: he was neither learned nor wise, he was rough and arrogant, incapable of expressing himself well because he had no training in logic; even his grasp of Holy Scripture was wanting). Similar measures were taken, over a period of about ten years, to finance other campaigns, although Anna skilfully telescopes these to give the impression that a single incident is at issue.[40] The scandal these confiscations produced evidently mounted, for in 1094 Alexios was obliged to call a meeting in the Blachernai palace, to explain to the senate, military commanders, and dignitaries of churches and monasteries that what he had done had been done out of necessity, and that it had always been his intention to reimburse. The plaintive institutions were invited to display their records, to show whether valuables deposited with them were removed by Alexios, or by their donors. Anna maintains that it was discovered that in fact Alexios took nothing other than the gold and silver ornament from the tomb of the empress Zoe in Christ Antiphonetes and 'a few other small objects no longer in use for divine worship'. The defence that the seizure was in any case legitimate was reiterated and supported with noble precedents—Pericles and King David had done similar things. Anna then leaves us to assume that it is Alexios's magnanimity that led him to change his position entirely, accepting responsibility for the losses and agreeing to compensate Christ Antiphonetes and the Theotokos Chalkoprateia with annual payments of gold. Bishop Leo was later obliged to retire to Sozopolis on the Black Sea, where Alexios offered to provide well for his comfort. (The ill-educated Leo then proved his lack of sophistication by refusing the imperial pay-off.)

The careful construction of Anna's account of the church treasure scandal leaves no doubt that it is an apology for serious and sustained appropriation of church valuables that met with increasing opposition. Anna's claim that little treasure was involved is entirely unconvincing, for 'little' would not finance even one campaign, and the notion that precious objects 'no longer in use' are disposable has never had much appeal for custodians of wealth in

[40] Gautier, 'Synode de Blachernes', 280, n.1. The synod took place twelve years after the Norman campaign of 1082.

any context. Her attempt to minimize Alexios's error depends, however, on such expressions of disdain for material wealth, and, conversely, praise of opulent imperial patronage would certainly erode the image she presents of a man who puts the welfare of the empire above the hoarding of expensive objects. The church treasure episode also explains the specific point of Anna's failure to mention the renovation of the great triclinium of the Blachernai palace, since this hall was where the synod of 1094 was held—it was the very place in which Alexios had to argue the insignificance of luxury.

Anna's wish to establish the virtue of Alexios also affects her only detailed reference to a building commissioned by him. This is the *Orphanotropheion*, 'in the district of the Acropolis where the sea grows wider' (probably on the hillside below the later Topkapi Sarayi).[41] The *Orphanotropheion* was a hospice-cum-hospital, providing not only for orphan children but for the poor, the elderly and the infirm, particularly those disabled on Alexios's campaigns and their dependents. It is in the context of the latter that the description is given. Anna describes her father's orderly movement of troops as he returns slowly to Constantinople from a campaign in Asia Minor, towards the end of his reign. On the way he rescues prisoners from the Turks, stops for women to deliver their babies, and for the dying to receive last rites and proper burial. The elderly and sick eat at Alexios's own table, where he offers them his own rations and encourages his entourage to do likewise. (These meals were taken without musical accompaniment, unlike the confinements, which were heralded and followed by trumpet fanfares.) On arrival at the Asian shore, just across the Bosporos from Constantinople, Alexios forbids a triumphal approach to the city, going ahead himself in a small boat in order to be available to receive the column when it crosses the next day. Many of the needy are accommodated in the *Orphanotropheion* (which would have been only a short distance from the landing point).

Anna describes the *Orphanotropheion* as a city within the city. At its highest point, stood the church of St Paul, an early Christian basilica known from other sources; next to this was a school for

[41] *Al.*, XV.vii, L, III, 213-218, S, 491-495.

the orphans. Two-storeyed dwellings for the poor and mutilated, laid out in a double circle, were built by Alexios 'from the foundations'. He also built a large convent for poor Iberian (Georgian) nuns who previously begged their keep in Constantinople. Anna's description of the site is otherwise vague about structural details. She says that Alexios 'discovered' the site, thereby neatly evading the point that the *Orphanotropheion* was not in fact founded by him: the church was built by Justin II in the sixth century and he may have founded the *Orphanotropheion* too, which was certainly in existence by the ninth century and had been repaired by Romanos III after an earthquake of 1032.[42] The church may have been further restored by Alexios, but Anna says only that he supplied it with clergy and 'expensive lighting' (a functional, rather than decorative provision, it may be noted), which rather suggests that little else was needed there. In any case, here as elsewhere, Anna is little concerned with physical appearances and her main interest is to demonstrate the philanthropic nature of her father. The details she gives refer chiefly to the inhabitants of the *Orphanotropheion* and Alexios's care for them: it would take all day to visit the entire community; the disabled were cared for by the able-bodied; the emperor provided revenue and produce for the liberal feeding, clothing and shelter of all, and for the education of orphan boys.

While she does not offer conventional praise of the fabric of the *Orphanotropheion*, her account does use the conventions of the panegyrist in other ways. Her description is heavy with Biblical allusions: the number of needy cared for at the *Orphanotropheion* is likened to that of the multitude fed by Jesus (with a hint that while God could manage with five fishes, human charity required greater largesse). Alexios could not, Anna admits, perform miracles like the healing of the paralytic or of the blind man, but he did what he could—her reader is left to draw the parallel between the emperor and Christ; her assertion that Alexios provided the *Orphanotropheion* with the resources 'of both land and sea' even recalls the role of God at the Creation. Anna likens the *Orphanotropheion* to Solomon's Porch, at the Temple in Jerusalem, an interesting allusion since Solomon's Temple is so often the point of refer-

[42] Janin, *Géographie*, 399-400.

ence for splendour and luxury in descriptions of buildings.[43] Justinian's Hagia Sophia, for example, was said to rival the Temple of Solomon, and Psellos accuses Romanos III of trying to outdo both Justinian and Solomon with the Theotokos Peribleptos.[44] The Porch of the Temple was, however, the place where St Peter healed a lame man, so Anna seems to be inviting her reader to compare conventional references to Solomon's Temple for its riches with her own allusion to it as a place of succour for the needy.[45]

Anna's vagueness about the dimensions of the *Orphanotropheion*—'a certain number of stades in length and breadth' is reminiscent of the panegyrist's common lack of precision when faced with grandeur (Procopius, for example, gives no measurements of Hagia Sophia, which is 'appropriately proportioned...very long and extremely broad').[46] But while the usual point of inexactitude is that the building is too splendid to be given clear limits, Anna surely wishes to convey that it is the generosity of Alexios that cannot be measured. This is also the case when she takes up another traditional reference, to the largesse of the patron: Alexios devotes incalculable care and expense to the needs of the inhabitants of the *Orphanotropheion*, recalling for the reader accounts that other emperors, like Basil I, gave much attention to, and provided abundant resources for, the restoration and embellishment of buildings.[47] Like the writers of *ekphraseis*, Anna also enjoys playing with numbers and correspondences: the buildings of the *Orphanotropheion* form a double circle, on two floors; the city is four-fold, with some inhabitants on the ground floor and others above, and still others caring for both. The linking of two and four here is sufficiently awkward for it to be likely that Anna has a particular model in mind—possibly that of the rich publican Zacchaeus, who, when Jesus stayed at his house, divided

[43] The Temple is described in *II.Chronicles* 3-4 and *I.Kings* 6; for the Porch, *I.Chronicles* 28:11.

[44] *Narratio de structura templi S. Sophiae*, T. Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum* (Leipzig, 1901), I, 74-108, 27.

[45] *Acts* 3:11.

[46] Procopius, VII, *De aed*, I.i.28-31, ed. tr. H.B. Dewing with G. Downey (London, 1940), 12-17.

[47] See n.1 above.

his property into two, giving half to the poor, and promising fourfold compensation to those he had cheated.[48] Such an allusion would well support Anna's presentation of her father as a virtuous man, capable of worldly error (such as confiscating church treasure, for example) but compensating for it with the kind of munificence that other emperors gave to material expressions of their power.

The further question now arises how far this was an accurate portrayal of Alexios, at least in the present context of patronage of the arts. Did Anna suppress an aspect of Alexios's activity, or was he really a very modest patron? The latter would seem to be the case, given that the level of patronage deducible from the sources other than the *Alexiad* noted above appears very limited. Even at the *Orphanotropheion*, the only large undertaking of which we know, the accommodation for inhabitants may have been extensive, but it is unlikely to have been luxurious, and the site already possessed a large church. It may be conjectured, too, that had Alexios's patronage been more extensive, Anna would not have been able to ignore it. She would instead, one feels, have directed her literary talents towards justification of his commissions, just as she did for his harvesting of church valuables. Possibly, therefore, Alexios kept personal patronage to a minimum, leaving some necessary commissions to members of his family, as the example of the monastery of Christ Philanthropos suggests.

Indeed among Alexios's relatives we find activity which is much more in keeping with the survey of imperial patronage given at the start of this discussion, a circumstance which accentuates the lack of evidence for the patronage of Alexios himself. Between 1081 and 1087, Alexios's mother, Anna Dalassene, built a monastery for her retirement, of which the church of Christ Pantepoptes remains.[49] This is a small inscribed-cross church with a single narthex, an elegant, well-built structure with carved marble cornices of high quality (and doubtless other fine fittings, now lost). Alexios's mother-in-law Maria Doukaina restored the Chora

[48] *Luke* 19:8.

[49] Janin, *Géographie*, 513-515; T. Mathews, *The Byzantine churches of Istanbul. A photographic survey* (University Park, PA, 1976), 59-70.

monastery at about the same time (between 1077 and 1081) and fragments of her church (Phase III, again an inscribed-cross) remain embedded in the Palaiologan church of Theodore Metochites.[50] No trace survives of the double monastery founded by Alexios's wife Eirene, but the *typikon* of its female half, the Theotokos Kecharitomene, mentions apartments for the Komnenian ladies which include two bath-houses, so the establishment does not appear to have been austere.[51] The Chora church was restored again between 1118 and 1122 (Phase IV), about forty years after Maria Doukaina's work there, by Alexios's third son, Isaac.[52] Isaac was to have been buried there, but during a period of exile decided instead to place his tomb in the Panagia Kosmosoteira in Pherrai (Thrace), the modified inscribed-cross church of which survives.[53] Its *typikon*, of 1152, provides for the transfer of tomb fittings from the Chora, including marble slabs and bronze railings; the monument was also to be embellished with two mosaic icons. Isaac, therefore, did not seek a humble grave.[54]

The imperial philanthropy promoted by Alexios is continued in the major commission of his son John II. With his empress Eirene, John built the Pantokrator monastery between his accession in 1118 and 1136, the date of its *typikon*.[55] The monastery buildings have gone, but the *typikon* describes in detail the facilities of its large hospital, which provided separate wards for different types of ailment, and had a specialist medical staff.[56] Like the *Orphanotropheion*, this was evidently a charitable institution on a large scale. The Pantokrator monastery combines its charity with traditional imperial opulence, however, for its surviving complex of

[50] R.G. Ousterhout, *The architecture of the Kariye Camii in Istanbul*, (Washington, DC, 1987), 15-20.

[51] Janin, *Géographie*, 189-190.

[52] Ousterhout, *Kariye Camii*, 20-32.

[53] S. Sinos, *Die Klosterkirche der Kosmosoteira in Vera (Vira)* (Byzantinische Archiv, 17, Munich, 1985).

[54] N.P. Ševčenko, 'The tomb of Isaak Komnenos at Pherrai', *GOThR*, 29 (1984), 135-139.

[55] Janin, *Géographie*, 515-516.

[56] *PantokratorTyp*, *Τυπικὸν τῆς βασιλικῆς μονῆς τοῦ Παντοκράτορος*, ed. P. Gautier, 'Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator', *REB*, 32 (1974), 1-142 at 82-108.

two inscribed-cross churches and a two-domed funerary chapel is impressive, with fragments of once-splendid marble floors, panelling and mosaic decoration still in place.[57] There survives, moreover, an *ekphrasis* of the Pantokrator monastery, couched in the traditional language of praise for the building.[58] John was clearly not reluctant to express imperial status in material terms, nor was his son, Manuel I (1143-1180), who was an imperial patron of the old school, building halls in both the imperial and the Blachernai palaces, palaces on the Bosporos, restoring and extending the monastery of St Mokios and much else.[59]

Alexios's heirs also exhibit an enthusiasm for imperial imagery not seen in Alexios himself.[60] Isaac commanded that portraits of his parents should be attached to his tomb at Pherrai, and that a portrait of himself, done in his youth, should remain at the Chora (where he evidently took other steps to keep his memory alive, for his portrait was included in the fourteenth-century mosaic decoration of Metochites).[61] Evidence for John II's similar concern with both status and posterity is found in the well-known 'John' panel in the south gallery of Hagia Sophia, where there were once many portraits of emperors and patriarchs. The panel, set up c. 1122, depicts John and Eirene presenting a pouch of money and a scroll to the Virgin, with their son, Alexios II, placed at right-angles to his parents on the projecting side of an adjacent pier. To the left of the panel is a very similar one, set up nearly a century earlier, showing the empress Zoe with her last husband, Constantine IX Monomachos, making similar presentations to Christ.[62] Zoe was

[57] Mathews, *Istanbul*, 71-101.

[58] D. Kampouroglous, *Μνημεῖα τῆς ἱστορίας τῶν Αθηναίων* (Athens, 1982), III 127-131.

[59] Magdalino and Nelson, 'The emperor in Byzantine art', 171-172.

[60] The tradition of imperial imagery was an ancient one, see A. Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantine* (Paris, 1936).

[61] Ševčenko, 'Tomb', '136; P.A. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami* (New York 1966), I, 45-46.

[62] T. Whittemore, *The mosaics of Hagia Sophia at Istanbul. The Imperial portraits of the south gallery* (Oxford, 1942). The Zoe panel was probably installed shortly after Zoe's accession in 1028, when she was married to Romanos III; disturbance to the inscription next to the emperor indicates that it was altered on Zoe's subsequent marriages.

the last reigning member of the family of Basil the Macedonian, and both the placing of the 'John' panel and its borrowed iconography serve to identify the Komnenoi as worthy successors to the Macedonian dynasty (the stripping of Zoe's tomb had evidently been forgotten). The awkward placing of Alexios II on the projecting pier may be accounted for by the wish to achieve a symmetry with the Zoe panel that would have been lost had Alexios been placed in the main field, thereby adding an extra figure to the composition and causing all the figures in the 'John' panel to be scaled down to fit the available space. Manuel I took this concern with imperial 'antecedents' (whether of the same blood-line or not) still further, as is evident from the image in the St Mokios refectory, described above. Epigrams from the same collection, and other sources, describe similar images, in churches, monasteries, palaces and houses, such as one in a monastery founded by George Palaiologos, showing Manuel in the company of John II, Alexios, Nikephoros III, Romanos IV, Michael VII and Constantine X.[63] We may therefore see in the patronage of Alexios's sons and grandson both a return to imperial interest in material display and a promotion of imperial imagery that may even have been something of a reaction to Alexios's own reluctance to provide visual expression of his status.

It may also be the case that Alexios's failure to provide the imperial lead usually given to patronage of the arts affected the quality and availability of master-builders in Constantinople. It is difficult to define the standards of architecture in the capital of the twelfth century, since so few examples remain, but it may be observed that, while the Pantokrator church-complex was certainly opulent, it is somewhat inept in terms of building design. The south church, of Christ Pantokrator, was built first, followed by the north church of the Theotokos, and then the space between them was filled by the funerary chapel of St Michael. The chapel is of irregular form because the two churches were not set parallel to each other, and their narthexes are awkwardly joined just outside the entrance to the chapel, forcing asymmetry upon the entrances

[63] Lampros, 'Κῶδιξ 524', 138-140 (misprinted 148-150), tr. Mango, *Sources*, 227.

of the latter.[64] This sort of haphazard arrangement usually results from the accretion of structures on a site over a long period, but the construction of the Pantokrator monastery took no more than eighteen years, and perhaps much less since it may have been the work of a single builder.[65] It is possible, of course, that imperial changes of intention set the builder a difficult task, or that he got the commission for reasons unconnected with his abilities; such things happen. On the other hand, a decline in major building commissions during the thirty-seven-year reign of Alexios may have sent the best craftsmen to seek work outside the capital, in Thessalonike, for example, or other prosperous towns of Greece.

In conclusion, it would appear that Alexios I was not a significant patron of the arts. This may have been partly a matter of temperament, as it was with Basil II, but it is likely to have been also a matter of choice. While Alexios should not be denied credit for philanthropic leanings often absent from the powerful, it was also in his interests to adopt an attitude of unconcern for material display, and to show himself devoted instead to the welfare both of the needy and of the empire itself. This stance was a significant part of his justification both for usurping the throne and of his seizure of church treasure. The reign of Alexios may therefore be seen as one in which imperial patronage of architecture and the arts diminished, and imperial philanthropy was promoted in its stead. The philanthropic goal was still significant in the reign of Alexios's son John, who, however, felt no need to couple it with austerity, while Manuel returns imperial patronage to its pre-Alexian level.

[64] A.H.S. Megaw, 'Notes on recent work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul', *DOP*, 17 (1963), 335-364 at 342-344.

[65] One Nikephoros Bezaleel is named in the *ekphrasis* of the Pantokrator monastery, also in some *synaxaria*. Kampouroglous, *Μνημεῖα*, 128; *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Propylaeum ad Acta SS Novembris*, ed. H. Delehaye (Brussels, 1902), 889.30.

17

The imperial vocabulary of Alexios I Komnenos

Margaret Mullett

Contributors to this volume agree that Alexios's long reign made a great deal of difference not only to the empire but to the emperor, the idea of the emperor, that is. Most surviving portraits of Alexios, both in pictures and in words, appropriate him for the purposes of a later patron or writer: it is agreed that neither Anna's *Alexiad* nor Zonaras's account presents an unvarnished portrait, and were both written long after the death of the emperor. The *Alexiad*, presenting him as the thirteenth apostle, is mirrored by the miniatures of Vat. gr. 666, which, it has been argued,[1] may also date from well after the death of Alexios;[2] the *Alexiad*'s story is countered by (at least)[3] John's programme of mosaics or painting for the golden Kouboukleion celebrated by Nicholas Kallikles, presenting Alexios as victorious, but also dead,[4] and (it is suggested)[5] by their brother Isaac's portrait of Alexios at the Panagia

[1] P. Magdalino and R. Nelson, 'The emperor in Byzantine art of the twelfth century', *ByzForsch*, 8 (1982), 123-183, repr. *Tradition and transformation in medieval Byzantium* (Aldershot, 1991), VI, at 149-151. See however, below, 376.

[2] I. Spatharakis, *The portrait in Byzantine illuminated manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), plates 78, 79, 80; see below, *Alexios I Komnenos*, II (BBTT.4.2, Belfast, 1996), plates 1, 2, 3. (All plates are in volume II.)

[3] For the attribution and stance of the *Mousai* see below, II.

[4] Nicholas Kallikles, *Εἰς τὴν ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ δευτέραν παρουσίαν*, no. 24, ed. R. Romano, *Nicola Callicle, Carmi* (Byz et Neo-HellNapol, 8, Naples, 1980), 101-102.

[5] See C. Bakirtzes, 'Warrior saints or portraits of the members of the family of Alexios I Komnenos?' *A mosaic of Byzantine and Cypriot studies for A.H.S.*

Kosmosoteira in full military dress.[6] Hardly anything on closer inspection appears to be truly contemporary with Alexios.[7]

It would therefore seem important to establish a portrait of Alexios as emperor from texts primarily concerned with imperial image (which may reasonably be expected to mirror the subtle changes in the established vocabulary of empire) and dating from the reign of Alexios rather than from thirty years on. These are of various kinds, and, it will be seen, plentiful—although it has been noted that Alexios suffers in comparison with his son and grandson from a scarcity of imperial literature.[8] Various explanations for such scarcity could be offered: was not Alexios remarkably unconcerned with ceremony?[9] and was he not responsible for a neglect of literature remarkable in one whose daughter, son, and son-in-law were writers and whose mother, mistress, wife, daughter and daughter-in-law were notable patrons of learning and literature?[10]

Both hypotheses are misleading. Alexios was no Constantine Porphyrogennetos, but then he was very much less in Constantinople than that emperor. Though we catch sight of the Epiphany speech of the *maistor*, of victory acclamations, of various feast-days in the City, and the family outings to Derkos to see Cyril Phileotes, Alexios spent much of his life on campaign, and it is perhaps the ceremony of the tent that should be examined where he is concerned.[11] Cyril had a vision of Alexios sitting on a high imperial throne in a tent like a church with his enemy, a great black dog with eyes like blood, chained and flung at his feet;[12] the trumpet, a frequently evoked instrument of Alexios's reign,[13] signals the halt of the army's march for births and deaths;[14] and we get some sense of the ceremony of the tent and the insouciant and ceremonious departure of his entourage for lunch in the middle of crisis.[15] Nicholas Kataskepenos's account shows Alexios very conscious of the body-language of meetings with monks: the bow, the blessing,

Megaw, ed. J. Herrin, M.E. Mullett, C. Otten-Froux (forthcoming). For Manuel I's image of Alexios see Rodley, above, 357.

[6] S. Sinos, *Die Klosterkirche der Kosmosoteira in Bera (Vira)* (Byzantinisches Archiv, 16, Munich, 1985), plate 122.

[7] The obvious exception is Alexios's coinage, by definition contemporary with him (see below, II, plate 7), and possibly another coin-derived image, the marble roundel in the Campiello de Ca' Angheran in Venice (plate 9). The identification as Alexios, weak on grounds of comparison with other portraits, would be strengthened if the interpretation of G. Vikan, *Catalogue of the sculpture in the Dumbarton Oaks collection from the Ptolemaic period to the renaissance* (Washington, DC, 1995), 104-108, plates 40 and 40.1, and M.F. Hendy, *Catalogue of coins in the Dumbarton Oaks collection*, IV, forthcoming, can be sustained. This depends on the view that another roundel in Dumbarton Oaks (of John II, facing to his left according to them, plate 8) and the Venice Alexios (facing right) look toward a third (lost) roundel of Christ or the Virgin. It would further raise the problem of why the senior emperor should be on the left hand of Christ. While two explanations offer themselves: 1) a posthumous portrait, to bolster John's legitimacy and 2) an iconography of penitence, cf. Nicholas Kallikles, poem 24, line 13, ed. Romano, 102, neither explanation may be needed. The roundels may not be part of any such triptych (the inclination is imperceptible to the untrained eye) and are certainly not part of the decoration of the Golden Kouboukleion described by Kallikles, poem 25, ed. Romano, 102-104. They may be Venetian in origin (there is some apparent misunderstanding of the loros and chlamys) or later (derived from the coins) or, if not after all associated in a single programme, not Alexios and John. I am grateful for conversations with Susan Boyd, Henry Maguire and Natalia Teteriatnikov.

[8] P. Magdalino, *The empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180* (Cambridge, 1992), 414.

[9] S. Runciman, 'Blachernae palace and its decoration', *Studies in memory of David Talbot Rice*, ed. G. Robertson and G. Henderson (Edinburgh, 1975), 278.

[10] For the idea of Alexios as cultural philistine, see L. Clucas, *The trial of John Italos* (MiscMonacByz, 26, Munich, 1981), esp. 3-8.

[11] J.C. Anderson and M.J. Jeffreys, 'The decoration of the sebastokratorissa Eirene's tent', *B*, 64 (1995), 8-18.

[12] Nicholas Kataskepenos, *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία καὶ μερικὴ θαυμάτων διήγησις τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Κυρίλλου τοῦ Φιλεώτου*, ch. 36, ed. E. Sargologos, *La vie de saint Cyrille le Philéote moine byzantin (†1110)* (SubsHag, 39, Brussels, 1964), 154.

[13] E.g. Euthymios Zigabenos, poem 3.20, *PG*, 130, 20; *Mousai*, I, 226.

[14] Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, XV.vii.2, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols (Paris, 1937-1945), III, 214, tr. E.R.A. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1988), 491-2, including the fluteless dinners.

[15] For Eirene's tent, *Al.*,XII.iii.9, L, III, 63, S, 377-378; the family row of *Al.*, VIII.viii, L, II, 149-151, S, 263-265 takes place in the imperial tent; Alexios returns from hunting to hear the news of Bohemond's landing at *Al.*,XII.ix.7, L, III, 85, S, 394.

the embrace at Derkos, the donning of the *zone* and the washing of the hands when called on by a monk.[16]

I deal with the idea of Alexios as literary philistine elsewhere,[17] but I simply note here the sense in contemporary texts of the importance of rhetoric during his reign, and not only in writers who might have a declared interest in *logoi*. Theodore of Smyrna in *Timarion* contrasts the underworld with the world above, where 'verbal dexterity and popular prettification' were the order of the day, and he was carried in on a litter to address the emperor;[18] Manuel Straboromanos says that many authors have sung in verse and prose the exploits of Alexios,[19] and Theophylact in 1088 refers to the efforts of others and of himself to praise Alexios, perhaps the 'monuments of victory' of *Mousai*, I.7.[20] The author of the *Mousai* assumes a ruler will be concerned for future panegyric as well as for the life to come, and tells John to make a place for a rhetor in council, though to privilege action over words.[21] In Theophylact's speech we gain a sense of Alexios's own skill: among Alexios's achievements in diplomacy is commended his skill in expression, εὐπόρως εἰπεῖν, and here, as in the *Life* of Cyril Phileotes, Alexios's missionary polemic is commended.[22] That it was not always clear that rhetoric would prevail emerges from the two speeches of the 1080s: the speech to Constantine Doukas in which the rhetor wonders whether the boy-emperor will be *philorhetor* and ends with the exhortation to honour *logoi* and be honoured. The speech to Alexios begins with an assertion that it is the custom to open the palace to orators, and ends with a plea for *so-*

[16] *VCyril*, chs. 47.1, 47.13-14, ed. Sargologos, 225, 234-235.

[17] M.E. Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid: Reading the letters of a Byzantine archbishop* (BBOM, 2, Aldershot, 1996), ch. 2.6, and below, II.

[18] *Timarion*, chs. 24; 23, ed. R. Romano, *Timarione* (Byz et NeohellNap, 2, Naples, 1974), 71.596-598; 72.619-620.

[19] Manuel Straboromanos, or. 1, ed. P. Gautier, 'Le dossier d'un haut fonctionnaire d'Alexis Ier Comnène, Manuel Straboromanos', *REB*, 31 (1973), 181.14-18.

[20] Theophylact of Ochrid, or. 5, to Alexios, ed. P. Gautier, *Théophylacte*, I, *discours, traités, poésies* (CFHB, 16/1, Thessalonike, 1980), 217.4-6; *Mousai*, I, 7.

[21] *Mousai*, I. 90-91.

[22] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 223.23; 227.25-229.15; see above, Shepard, 80; *VCyril*, ch. 47.7, ed. Sargologos, 230-231.

phistike: Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius and Commodus[23] have reestablished a dead custom in paying for rhetors at court: Alexios is urged to follow suit, which he appears to have done.[24]

In what follows I place the greatest stress on texts which purport to have been delivered in the presence of Alexios, as well as to works commissioned by him; I leave to the second volume consideration of works which claim to have been written by him. But I shall also consider works which deal with the emperor in general rather than with Alexios in particular, and works which imitate imperial panegyric at a less elevated social level. I cautiously include the late[25] life of Cyril for its detailed parainetic interviews, and for the limited purposes of this chapter I accept the dating to this period of *Timarion*, some form of *Digenes* and Kekaumenos.[26] I shall deal with praise, blame, advice and propaganda.

Genre and occasion

The one essential text in any consideration of Alexios's contemporary imperial image is the only[27] surviving[28] ceremonial *basilikos lo-*

[23] Magdalino, *Empire*, 427 for an identification of these figures as the emperors from Constantine IX to Michael VII.

[24] Theophylact, or. 4, to Constantine, ed. Gautier, 211.8-10; or. 5, ed. Gautier, 242.1-9.

[25] It must postdate the translation of the relics of Cyril in 1121, ch. 55.4, ed. Sargologos, 262; if Nicholas's autograph already used the surname Kataskepenos it must postdate the foundation of Kataskepe by Manuel.

[26] See above, Beaton, 332-333 and Galatariotou, 305-308. On the dating of Digenes see the differing views of Beaton and Galatariotou (c. 1100) and Magdalino and Jeffreys (c. 1150) in R. Beaton and D. Ricks, *Digenes Akrites. New approaches to Byzantine heroic poetry* (KCL, 2, Aldershot, 1993), 1-14; 26-37; 38-54; 161-170.

[27] Michael Psellos, or. 20, *Προσφώνησις πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα κῦρ Ρωμανὸν τὸν Διογένην παρὰ τῶν πολιτῶν ἐν κλητορίῳ*, ed. G. Dennis, *Michael Psellus, orationes panegyricae* (Leipzig, 1994), 182-184, is entitled in Vat.gr.624 *Λόγος προσφωνηθεὶς πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα τὸν Κομνηνόν*, and Sathas, *MB*,VI, 228-230, judged this to be Alexios. Some support for this view may be found in A. Kazhdan and S. Franklin, *Studies on Byzantine literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (P&PP, Cambridge, 1984), 53-55; *ODB*, III, 1754, but nothing in the speech demands that it be to Alexios, and the most recent editor, Dennis, dates it to the winter of 1069 or 1071.

[28] There were others, see above nn. 17 and 18.

gos, the speech of Theophylact Hephaistos, dated by Gautier to 1088. Though it contains no Jordan imagery and talks of rhetors in the plural and general, it is convincing as an Epiphany speech of the *maistor ton rhetoron*, conscious of his pedigree.[29] The performance context is credible in the light of twelfth-century Epiphany speeches, in which the *maistor* hands over to the *paides* to try their own rhetoric on the emperor. He refers to the *kyklos* around the emperor, and we are given to understand that also present are Anna Dalassene, Eirene Doukaina, and possibly Isaac and the infant John.[30]

I have argued elsewhere[31] that this speech must be read with another of three or four years previously, the speech by Theophylact to the boy-emperor Constantine Doukas, often known as the *Paideia basilike*. Here the performance context is less clear; the occasion again appears to be annual, and the speech a gift from the rhetor, who presents himself as the teacher of the boy, though possibly for this occasion alone. With him is a χρηστότατος χόρος of whom only his mother, the ex-basilissa Maria, can be identified, and the date and place are unknown. If it is an Epiphany speech, the emperor is not present, and the alternative court of Maria at the Mangana remains a possibility.[32]

The differences between the speeches are obvious: the address to the boy as βασιλεῦ φίλε, stands against the simple αὐτοκράτορ to the man, and the structures are so different as to be complementary. In the speech to Alexios, Theophylact signals that he will go straight to the virtues, so omitting the introductory matter of *patris* and *genos*, *genesis* and *paideia*. The speech to Constantine on the

[29] On the office see R. Macrides, 'Nomos and kanon, on paper and in court', *Church and people in Byzantium*, ed. R. Morris (Birmingham, 1990), 70-71, n. 46.

[30] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 243.10-13.

[31] M.E. Mullett, 'The "disgrace" of the ex-basilissa Maria', *BS*, 45 (1984), 202-211.

[32] Theophylact, or. 4, ed. Gautier, *Théophylacte*, I, 179.1-4 ; for the choros, or. 4, ed. Gautier, 183.18. The καὶ ἐγώ of the opening may suggest that another speaker preceded him. If this were the *maistor* of the day, perhaps the John of the Italos trial, ed. J. Gouillard, 'Le procès officiel de Jean Italos', *TM*, 9 (1985), 145.155-156, Epiphany rather than a birthday or some other occasion seems less likely.

other hand deals elaborately with these headings, taking the opportunity of the last to lead into parainetic material, suitable for a young prince for whom no *praxeis* can yet be recited.

Both however end with a plea for *logoi*, and both signal the new style of Komnenian Constantinople, where hunting is the ruler's only relaxation and actors are exiled from the palace, but where the tone is set by an imperial mother with monastic pretensions, who is learned, wise and good. *Sophrosyne* and *eukosmia* in the palace set the new reign on a new moral footing; *teknogonia* is praised, but *arete* is all. The difference between the mothers lies in their respective political power: Maria is restricted to *philanthropia* and *eleos*; Anna is responsible for the unity of the branches of her family, unity which leads to good government. Maria is elaborately praised for her demanding reading, but Anna's *phronesis* is compared to Solomon's. Explicitly Theophylact remarks that many women are capable of great exploits, but that Anna surpasses all in her *phronesis*. Nor is she lacking in *sophrosyne*, and it is her tears and prayers which brought victory. Both speeches are double *basilikoi logoi*, to an emperor and his mother, but the balance is different; in the speech to Constantine, Maria appears under the natural heading of *genos* and reappears after the parainetic excursus as the adult to whom praise is offered; Anna is worked in at the end, after Alexios's virtues have been enumerated (and the natural lead-in from *sophrosyne* has been used for Eirene); Alexios never loses the supreme position in this text.

Neither emperor in either speech however is so enthusiastically praised as is Alexios in Niketas of Ankara's *On ordinations*, dated by Darrouzès to 1087.[33] Power, *theosebeia*, greatness, *euprepeia* are celebrated, and the imperial presence is Christloving and famed; the court of Alexios and the court of heaven are compared. It is hard to follow Darrouzès when he argues that the imperial presence is illusory; the praise was necessary for the occasional setting and for the imperial presence, which needed to be placated and

[33] Niketas of Ankara, *Λόγος διαλαμβάνων ὡς οὐ δεῖ τὸν Κωνσταντινουπόλεως χειροτονεῖν εἰς τὰς ἑτέροις ὑποκειμένας ἐπισκοπάς, κἂν μητροπόλεις τιμηθῶσιν. ἔστι γὰρ τοῦτο παρὰ τὴν ἁγίων πατέρων διάταξιν*, ed. J. Darrouzès, *Documents inédits d'ecclésiologie byzantine* (AOC, 10, Paris, 1966), 176-207; dating at 42.

persuaded; a memorandum to be tabled at the synod must surely have captured its benevolence in a rather different way, just as a subsequent record for the patriarchal archives might well have edited out the distracting panegyric from an essentially deliberative piece. It is at least conceivable that τὸν παρόντα κραταιότατον βασιλέα[34] was actually there.

Two others of his discourses address the emperor. *On elections*, also dated to 1087, begins 'Our holy master and God-guarded emperor' and takes up the constitutional issue of whether anyone who opposes an imperial decree is guilty of sacrilege, ending with the hope that this should not happen 'during the pious and Christ-loving rule of you God-guarded and perfectly pious emperors'.[35]

The imperial tone of *On forbidden marriages*, dated to 1092, is different again. The first twenty-eight lines are devoted to praise of the emperor. It starts with Ps.105.2, 'Who will speak of the power of the Lord and who will make his praise?', followed by Ps.146.2, 'Great is the lord'. The praise then turns to the emperor:

> Behold our powerful and holy emperor, the lover of good, Christloving, merciful, mighty in intelligence and forbearance, powerful in war, the acclaim of orthodox emperors, the power of Christians, the great support of the church, the surest foundation of religion, the anointed of the Lord...

The stages of the argument are articulated by reference to the emperor: 'what do you say to that, most holy emperor and Christ-imitating master?' 'Thus our good emperor, thus the law-loving προστεταχὼς θεσπίσει τὸ δίκαιον καὶ εὐπρεπὲς κἂν τοῖς γάμοις ἀλέξημα τῇ χριστιανικῇ προσεπινοήσας καταστάσει...' 'About these things we beseech you, O most powerful of orthodox emperors, on this we write, on this we beg you.' The final ten lines are a prayer for the emperor to be maintained in his powerful strength, with his opponents under his hand, and for the new-born

[34] Ibid., 198.33.

[35] Niketas of Ankara, *Λόγος πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα σπουδάζοντα διαλῦσαι τὰς συνοδικῶς γενομένας ψήφους διὰ πιττακίου πεμφθέντος, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἐγέγραπτο· Ὁ οἱαδήποτε ἀντιγραφῇ βασιλικῇ ἐναντιούμενος ὡς ἱερόσυλος τιμωρείσθω*, ed. Darrouzès, *Documents inédits*, 238-249; date at 44-45; specifically 238.1; 248.31-32.

and God-crowned emperor (John).[36] These various appeals to the emperor establish him as a serious player in the great ecclesiastical disputes of the time, as the pious and God-fearing protection for the empire and a force within the church to be persuaded.

A third set of speeches to the emperor are unlikely bedfellows for the praises we have surveyed hitherto. Yet by considering them in this context we may learn more about their function. They are a *logos* and a *symboule* addressed to the emperor by John the Oxite, patriarch of Antioch, dated clearly by context to the hard winter of 1090-1091, thus predating by a year the last of Niketas's discourses. Although described by their editor Gautier as diatribes they are not technically so, and indeed bear little resemblance to any of the possible genres of imperial address; though this is not in itself evidence of generic innocence, we should note that John takes pride in his plain speaking.[37]

The first is addressed to the emperor returning from his campaign against the Skyths and anxious for advice. John makes the performance context clear: 'so listen, O emperor, you and your close ones who are seated in your presence, or indeed the whole people who have gathered as an audience for my speech.'[38] He begins with a description of imperial function rather than praise: the emperor is the shepherd of the flock, who brings consolation for all, the prop supporting a rotten house, and the pilot of a ship. John describes his own role, which is prophetic: he is the high priest of the lord and the watchman of the house of Israel.[39] The structure is fairly straightforward; sometimes, though not always,

[36] Niketas of Ankara, *Λόγος διαλαμβάνων περὶ γάμων, τοῦ βασιλέως προστάξαντος γράψαι καὶ οὕτως κωλῦσαι τὰς ἀθεμιτογαμίας*, ed. Darrouzès, *Documents inédits*, 268-275. The encomium is 268.1-269.4; the appeals to the emperor at 271.5; 272.8; 273.28; the prayer 274.35-275.6.

[37] John the Oxite, *Λόγος εἰς τὸν βασιλέα κῦρ Ἀλέξιον τὸν Κομνηνόν*, ed. P. Gautier, 'Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite contre Alexis Ier Comnène', *REB*, 28 (1970), 5-55 at 19.22-23; 19.26-21.1.

[38] John the Oxite, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 21.13-16.

[39] John the Oxite, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 19.5; 12-13; 13-15 for Alexios; 21.1-3 for John.

one section is marked off from another by a reminding 'O emperor'.[40]

Properly he begins his treatment with God and his attitude to his creation.[41] By elevating one man and by subjecting him to dangers and tests he demonstrates to all that the God of Christians gives power to his people when they do righteous deeds and blesses them with peace. And so the ups and downs of a brilliant man are of concern to Christians, and it is not the power of enemies but the deprivation of God's protection which causes the defeat of the empire. A closer examination of the fortunes of Alexios is therefore desirable.

The next two sections contrast the success of Alexios before he came to power and his relative failure since. A trace of panegyric marks the beginning of the former: *genos* and *genesis* are invoked, and Roussel is described as a Frankish dog. The capture of Bryennios and Basilakes are compared to Gideon's successes against the might of Midian. The very Skyths who encircle the empire now tremble at the sound of his name. 'O what brilliance, what acclaim, what honour, what approval you enjoyed from all. Whoever was on the throne, you had the practice and the power, you were on everyone's lips and you garnered from your achievements a righteous glory.'[42]

In the next section panegyric turns to psogos, and this is the most quoted section of the speech. Since Alexios has come to power, the empire has fallen upon hard times, wars, troubles, misfortunes, abandoned armies, upon which like sheep the enemy has fallen, captured cities, Christian blood spilt on land and sea, and, worst of calamities, the disasters have reached even this city, once the eye of the known world. Yet Alexios is not to blame: it would have been understandable had he abandoned war to others, and stayed inside the palace in luxury and pleasure, but he lived and fought with his subjects, spent parsimoniously and did not seek to exploit his former enjoyment of God's favour. John tries another

[40] E.g. at 21.30.

[41] John the Oxite, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 21.30-23.27.

[42] John the Oxite, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 23.28-25.32; specifically 25.26-30.

explanation: God has abandoned his flock.[43] This gets even shorter shrift, and John turns to the true explanation.

This is a long section, over one hundred lines in Gautier's edition,[44] but the explanation comes very quickly. His accession was unlawful, and *metanoia* is in order. But instead of recognising the war as a sign of God's displeasure and resorting to repentance Alexios had compounded his sin by confiscating church property to pay for the war effort. And not only in the capital: a whole army of tax-collectors had been set loose on the provinces to extort new taxes; all had suffered, even bishops, some of whom had been beaten, 'O earth and sun, and this under a pious emperor'; whole populations had fled from the assault. This is why God's anger took Chios and Mytilene, Cyprus, Crete, and why the empire of the Romans is restricted to the acropolis of Byzantium on the east and the Golden Gate on the west. The emperor had chosen to fight one enemy, the Skyths, but he had never returned without losing the better part of his army or indeed all of it at once.

But John offers medicine for these ills.[45] The first dose is to 'seek out the Lord, and like David and Ezechiel, be saved through humility.' The second dose is to give up all his bad practices and put his trust in God. Has he never heard of the ways in which the Theotokos has always saved her city? Has he never heard of the assault of the Russians in the reign of Michael III? Has he forgotten Constantine Doukas, whose tears turned away the Ouzes in 1064?[46]

John then turns to specifics and to a plan for government. 1) Alexios's family is a great drain on the exchequer, since each of them wishes to live like an emperor. This should end. 2) He should show great care about the appointment of magistrates; goodness rather than parsimony should be their mark. 3) He should return all that he confiscated unjustly. 4) And he should judge equitably, and cease oppressing the widow, the orphan and the poor.[47]

[43] John the Oxite, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 27.

[44] John the Oxite, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 29.1-35.32.

[45] John the Oxite, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 35.31-32: ἰάσομαι τοῖς ἐκ τῶν λόγων αὖθις φαρμάκοις.

[46] John the Oxite, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 37.6-7; 39.17-41.11.

[47] John the Oxite, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 41.12-43.36.

More general exhortations follow, with prayer and *tapeinophronesis* urged upon the emperor, and Heraclius as well as Old Testament warfare offered as a model. He ends with a prayer that God, the father of pity and prince of peace, should enable Alexios to know everything and carry it out, and should give him a peaceful reign and his people a peaceful life, when all their enemies have been defeated.

The second[48] piece, σαφεστάτως καὶ συντομωτάτως, summarises the argument and may well be an aide-memoire to follow the logos. It restricts itself to generalities, and appears to have no occasional setting.[49] That Alexios seems to have turned the corner is apparent not only from the history of his reign but from the only other extant speeches to him, by Manuel Straboromanos.[50] The first may have been delivered in his presence, but received no immediate reaction, though it was praised by others. On the other hand it begins with an elaborate comparison between *logos* and *grammata* and then turns to the praise of reading (as a consolation for poverty and lack of career-development), so it may not have been delivered in the emperor's presence.[51] The second is a follow-up to the first, showing anxiety that he had had no reply after ten days; this was rewarded by a reply from the emperor, praising the speech as a model of wisdom and humility, though demurring at the excessive praise of his own achievements.[52]

The speech is a begging-piece, which first describes the poverty and frustration of the rhetor, who sets himself to praise the emperor for his goodness to the poor, as he forgets to eat when out looking after orphans; even a rough-speaking farmer can approach

[48] G. Musumeci, 'Due logoi di Giovanni l'Oxita: ad Alessio Comneno: questioni di cronologia', *Συνδεσμός. Studi in onore di Rosario Anastasi*, I (Catania, 1991), 49-61, dates the 'second' to 1086.

[49] John the Oxite, *Συμβουλὴ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα*, ed. Gautier, 'Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite', 49-55.

[50] Manuel Straboromanos, ed. Gautier, 'Le dossier', 178-194.

[51] In contrast to another speech, a consolation delivered to Eirene the *augousta* on the death of her brother Michael the *protostrator*, or 4, ed. Gautier, 195-201: Ἀνεγνώσθη δὲ ἐν Μοσυνουπόλει παρὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Στραβορωμανοῦ, τὸ τῆς μεγάλης ἑταιρείας ὀφφίκιον τότε διέποντος.

[52] Manuel Straboromanos, or. 2, ed. Gautier, 193-194; Alexios, *Ἀντίγραμμα πρὸς τὸν ἀναγνωσθέντα λόγον*, ed. Gautier, 194.

him, and he is accessible to all, welcoming epileptics at his table.[53] Manuel then turns to his own misfortunes, his father's fall from favour, his own love of learning, and his mother's anxiety for his advancement, his disappointments and his long and faithful service in the palace guard.[54] Another panegyric section follows with an account of the decline of the empire from the time of Nero and a celebration of Alexios's victories. God did not abandon the empire but gave it Alexios as truly a salvation. He has pacified Europe, and reconquered territory from the Haemus to the Ister, including Serbia and Dalmatia and in Asia all the coastland from Cilicia to Colchis.[55] He presents Alexios as the lover of truth, and slides smoothly into his last begging section, using the myth of Hephaistos and the memory of the Roman censors to urge Alexios to reward his virtue before he died of old age.[56]

Victories were also celebrated in ceremonial poetry of the reign of Alexios (Manuel tells us),[57] of which only two pieces have survived. They are both in ms Argentinensis 7, and the second includes the name of the author, Stephen Physopalamites. It is a poem of 58 fifteen-syllable lines, addressed to Alexios (as βασιλεῦ, σὺ δὲ γεννάδα βασιλεῦ, then κομνηνοβλαστήτου, then ὁ Κομνηνός Ἀλέξιος) celebrating the capture of a fortified settlement (φρούριον, χάστρον) in war against the Latins. Welz identifies this with the reconquest of Kastoria in the First Norman War. In some ways it is a verse counterpart to John the Oxite's speech in that it begins with the troubles and *ponoi* of Alexios and recalls the victories of his youth. The aim is similar also, famously to bring peace with glory. But God plays a lesser role, appearing at line 40, 'only to you...' whereas already in line 10 Alexios is most powerful, great-named, a brilliant winner of trophies. There is no general round-up of these trophies, though sea, land and the depths of the καλλιξείνου πόντου (the Black Sea) are evoked, and the repetition of τὸ

[53] Manuel Straboromanos, or. 1, ed. Gautier, 182-183.29

[54] Manuel Straboromanos, or. 1, ed. Gautier, 183.30-189.2.

[55] Manuel Straboromanos, or. 1, ed. Gautier, 189.3191.6.

[56] Manuel Straboromanos, or. 1, ed. Gautier, 191.7-193.5.

[57] Manuel Straboromanos, or. 1, ed. Gautier, 181.17.

κάστρον, τὸ φρούριον, suggest that a single occasion of victory is being celebrated.[58]

The first poem is also in fifteen-syllable verse and more recognisably ceremonial as an alphabetic hymn,[59] which evokes the psalmist David. While the author is not in this text, he takes the opportunity to add a begging couplet at the end, outside the alphabet, 'sheltering us in full mastery, caring and cherishing us, opening before us your liberal hand'. It is clearly addressed to Alexios, in line 18 offering the coinage Κομνηναυγές φωσφόρε, and in line 24 ending the poem proper, 'O emperor Alexios, live for many years.' It contains the sun-imagery central to Byzantine ceremonial poetry and sets Alexios high on the scale of emperors, boast of all kings (twice), who has won a triple crown. This appeared to Welz to represent the Normans, the Pechenegs and Tzachas, and in view of the emphasis on the extirpation of the race of Hagar and the strange-tongued Persian barbarians, might signal the first-fruits of Alexios's reconquest.[60] It is unique in this, though two letters of Theophylact of Ochrid sing panegyrics to two of the agents of Alexios's victory in Asia, John Doukas against Tzachas in 1092 and Gregory Taronites against Danishmend in 1103.[61] It is

[58] Stephen Physopalamites, Πολλοὺς ὑπέστης, βασιλεῦ, fol. 236v-237r, ed. C. Welz, *Analecta Byzantina. Carmina inedita Theodori Prodromi et Stephani Physopalamitae* (Diss. Leipzig, 1910), 58-59.

[59] Cf Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *De cerimoniis*, 92 (83), ed. A. Vogt, *Constantin Porphyrogénète, Le livre de cérémonies*, II (Paris, 1967), 183-185. On the *alphabetikon*, mostly moral rather than ceremonial, see D.N. Anastasijewić, 'Alphabete', *BZ*, 16 (1907), 479-501; M.J. Jeffreys, 'The nature and origins of the political verse', *DOP*, 28 (1974), 143-195, esp. 175ff.

[60] Stephen Physopalamites, Ἀνάκτων πάντων καύχημα, fol. 237r-238v, ed. Welz, 54; for a translation see above, vi. Note the attractions of assonance with Ἀλέξιος in ἀνάξ Αὐσόνων, ἀλέξημα and so on, present in Nicholas Kallikles, Niketas of Ankara and the *Mousai* as well. For ἀλεξ- compoundss see also Nicholas of Kerkyra, *Στίχοι ἰαμβικοὶ τοῦ σοφωτάτου Κερκύρων κῦρ Νικολάου γεγονότες τῇ παραιτήσει αὐτοῦ*, line 42, ed. S. Lampros, *Κερκυραικὰ ἀνέκδοτα* (Athens, 1882), 30-41 at 31; Mouzalon, *Στίχοι Νικολάου μοναχοῦ τοῦ Μουζάλονος τοῦ γεγονότος ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κύπρου ἐν τῇ παραιτήσει αὐτοῦ γενόμενοι*, lines 205-206; 209, ed. S.I. Doanidou, "Η παραίτησις Νικολάου τοῦ Μουζάλωνος ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχιεπισκόπης Κύπρου ' *Ελληνικά*, 7 (1934), 109-150.

[61] Theophylact, epp. 8; 81, ed. P. Gautier, *Théophylacte d'Achrida, Lettres* (CFHB, 16.2, Thessalonike, 1986), 153-155; 427-433.

notable that in this most conventional of occasional verse there is space to hymn Alexios's holy power and acclaim him as a pillar of piety; his imperial model in meekness is to be the equally victorious (and hymnic) David.

Alexios's victories also appear in a poem of Nicholas Kallikles, but not of his own commissioning. (It belongs to the appropriation of Alexios by his children.)[62] In fact only one of Nicholas's poems may be associated with Alexios's patronage and it is an interesting retreat from the panegyric tone of John I's *epitaphios* for him. But Alexios does appear in five others of these poems, representing a strong presence in the collection.[63] In contrast to the later collection of Theodore Prodromos, they are not ceremonial verse, or imperial verse in a strict sense. They depend more on sight than sound, and give no indication that they were performed rather than viewed. Whether they are *ekphraseis* of imperial art or inscriptions on gifts to an emperor or a speech attached to an evoked wall-painting, they demand to be received visually rather than aurally.

The poem in question is placed in the mouth of Alexios. He first addresses Christ in describing a representation of the Second Coming in the palace. He points to the judge and the judgement seat and identifies the accusers and the accused. He identifies himself as a sufferer in the fire of torment, necessary for salvation. He then addresses a section of the viewers of the painting, κρίται σκοποῦντες, and ends: 'for you these things I say and write/paint, I Alexios Komnenos, king of the Ausonians'. We may imagine Alexios as tour guide, or his warning as inscribed on the painting, but the message is eternal rather than occasional.[64]

One other work associated with Alexios[65] may have had a ceremonial setting, but this remains to be proved. Two surviving manuscripts of Euthymios Zigabenos's *Panoplia dogmatike* suggest

[62] Nicholas Kallikles, poem 24 , ed. Romano, 101-102.

[63] Nicholas Kallikles, poems 16, 17, 19, 20, 25, ed. Romano, 91-92, 92, 93-94; 95, 102-104.

[64] Nicholas Kallikles, poem 24, ed. Romano, 101-102; discussed by Magdalino and Nelson, 'The emperor in Byzantine art', 124-126.

[65] For the patronage see *Al.*, XV.ix.1, L, III, 223, S, 500. The date, although associated in the *Alexiad* with the Bogomil trial (before 1104), is not known, but it is unlikely to be early in the reign.

that either one of them or an archetype was formally presented to Alexios. In Vat. gr. 666 and Mosqu. synod. 387[66] the treatise is preceded by three iambic poems, three illuminations, each with four lines of speech (the Fathers to Alexios, Alexios to the Fathers, Christ to Alexios), a four-line dedication formula and a prose encomium. This complex gift-wrapping is found in both, and raises the question whether the handsome illuminations of folios 1v and 2 (in Rome, 5v and 6 in Moscow) represent a ceremony of presentation of the volume to Alexios, with the fathers of the church standing in for the modest Euthymios or whether they are symbolic representations of a generalised emperor receiving the support of patristic learning. Magdalino and Nelson note that Alexios is not identified in Vat. gr. 666 whereas he is in Mosqu. synod. gr. 387. There is some considerable debate over the relationship of the manuscripts, but in both the accompanying iambics, *στίχοι ἰαμβικοί πρὸς βασιλέα Ἀλέξιον τὸν Κομνηνόν*, identify the recipient as Αλεξίου γῆς Αὐσόνων βασιλέως, poem 1, line 10, Ἀλεξίου φρόντισμα, poem 2, line 2, and the caption to the third illustration, spoken by Christ, clearly distinguishes Σὺ δὲ, ζῶν αἰωνίως, referring to the lifetime of a specific emperor, from Πολλοὶ βασιλεῖς. The two couplets preceding the prose *enkomion*,

> The work of Euthymios the solitary
> Zigabenos, the *Panoply of teachings*,
> is prepared for Alexios of the race of the Komnenoi,
> faithful king for the war with the faithless,[67]

and the prose *enkomion* itself are explicitly addressed to Alexios. With all this identification available there may have been no need for a specific inscription on the portraits. While neither manuscript itself may represent the presentation copy, the identical nature of the elements of the gift-wrapping in these two early manuscripts may point to the existence of such a copy and such a ceremony.

This proposed performance context, however, eludes the techniques I have attempted to establish above. In the poems which accompany the illuminations the dialogue is internal to the manu-

[66] Spatharakis, *The portrait*, plates 83, 84, 85; see below, II, plates 4, 5, 6.
[67] Euthymios Zigabenos, *PG*, 130, 20.

script. In 1v (Rome, 5v Moscow) the fathers address Alexios, in 2r (Rome, 6r, Moscow) he replies to the fathers, in 2v (Rome, 6v Moscow) Christ gives praise and validation to Alexios:[68] each picture has its own speech-bubble. The longer poems which precede in Moscow and follow in Rome are less direct: the first one begins, 'this book' and introduces Alexios in line 9 in a developed dedication formula, in terms of praise—εὐτύχημα Ῥωμίως μέγα—reminiscent of John the Oxite—and then piles up the military metaphors (walls, breastplates, siege engines), before returning to the volume appropriate to the εὐσεβὴς βασιλεύς. The second (like the second caption poem) gives credit to Alexios for the present work, and the present war against heresy. The trumpet at line 20 announces the royal personnel, a heavenly triad of sun, eirenic moon and the longed-for Morning Star of the Porphyry, the young *despotes*, before wishing them long life, freedom from ills and involving all the Komnenoi in eternal salvation. The last poem begins with the emperor's commission to the compiler, and then addresses the κριταὶ τοῦ βιβλίου, telling them to assign all praise to the ἀγχίνουν καὶ μέγαν βασιλέα. The prose *enkomion* begins with a simple dedication formula, the first couplet dealing with the donor, the second with the recipient. The prose *enkomion* again praises but indirectly. We are told why the great and God-guarded Alexios is to be praised: his political administration, his strategy in war, his technological advances, his adroit diplomacy, and above all his enthusiasm for orthodoxy and his appetite (in the thick of war) for the Scriptures. The emperor is praised throughout, and in every possible grammatical case—except the vocative. What is at stake is after all a volume, but the texts tempt us to envisage an occasion for the handing-over of that volume, without however offering the script spoken on that occasion.[69]

[68] I. Kalavrezou, 'Imperial relations with the church in the art of the Komnenians', *Τὸ Βυζάντιο κατὰ τὸν 12 αἰώνα· κανονικό δίκαιο, κράτος και κοινωνία*, ed. N. Oikonomides (Athens, 1991), 25-36 at 31 notices the confidence of the portrait of Alexios, with his eyes on a level with those of Christ, and the surprise-element in the speaker in the third miniature. She sees this confidence as increasing later in the Komnenian era.
[69] Euthymios Zigabenos, *PG*, 130, 20-21.

While the relative dating of the manuscripts of the *Panoplia dogmatike* must be left to palaeographers and art historians[70] and while there is still work to be done on these ceremonial poems,[71] it certainly appears that we need not see these manuscripts as merely a retrospective spin-off of the council of 1166; the poems of Marc.gr.524 may instead refer to a painting inspired by the iconography of the emperor's handed-down copy of the *Panoplia dogmatike*. Despite the indeterminacy of individual elements of the gift-packaging, taken as a whole both the ceremonial and the Alexian nature of the panegyric and poems seems to be signalled very clearly.[72]

Ceremonial settings are also envisaged in several works of the period which do refer to a generalised emperor or his ekprosopou, or in later works recalling audiences with Alexios, like the interviews (one with Anna Dalassene and two with Alexios) recorded in the mid-twelfth-century *Life* of Cyril Phileotes or with crusaders in the *Alexiad*.[73] These in fact might profitably be compared with the ceremonial setting of the emperor episode in Grottaferrata Digenes.[74] Here the emperor, curious about the hero, first sends a letter, inviting him to visit him, calling him τέκνον, and commending his *katorthomata*. Digenes replies, with equal courtliness, declining the appellation as well as the invitation; the emperor is δέσποτα ἅγιε and Digenes δοῦλος ἔσχατος τοῦ σοῦ κράτους. The emperor's reception of the letter is recorded (as only sometimes occurs in the description of Byzantine letter-ceremonial):[75] he reads the letter (γραφή) through, admiring the humility of the piece

[70] There is for example some difference between them on the date of the Moscow manuscript; both however place it in the twelfth century. (I am grateful to Alexander Saminsky for help on this point.)

[71] For example on their authorship; the Moscow manuscript does not attribute all to Zigabenos.

[72] Spatharakis, *The portrait*, 122-129.

[73] E.g. *Al.*, XIV.iv.3, L, III, 160, S, 450-451, see Shepard above, 96-97.

[74] IV, 971-1089, ed. J. Mavrogordato, *Digenes Akrites* (Oxford, 1956), 132-140.

[75] See my 'Writing in early mediaeval Byzantium', *The uses of literacy in early mediaeval Europe*, ed. R. McKitterick (Cambridge, 1990), 156-185, esp. 179-180; 'The language of diplomacy', *Byzantine diplomacy*, ed. J. Shepard and S. Franklin (SPBS, 1, Aldershot, 1992), 213-216 at 213-214.

(λόγος) and (we move into panegyric mode) rejoices, understanding the height of his correspondent's *andreia*. The poet notes that the emperor forbade his entourage (100 soldiers and a few spearmen) to indulge in psogos and the two men meet. Digenes went out alone, bowed to the ground, and made his *prosphonetikon*. Although short (4 lines) it is worthy of Menander Rhetor: 'hail, you who take your empire from God, who have mastered all nations through their impiety, how is it that the master of all the earth appears before me who am counted for nothing?' We now learn that the emperor was equipped with a throne on his travels, and comes forward from it to greet and embrace Digenes, to kiss him with joy, admiring his stature. The emperor replies that his beauty is proof of his *andreia* and bids him, τέκνον, to speak freely and ask what he wishes of his empire. Digenes again refuses the offer, because of the emperor's unmatched outgoings on the army, and delivers himself of ten lines of *parainesis* instead. He ends with what an emperor of Alexios's time could most have wanted, a donation of taxes. The emperor continues the ceremony with joy, addresses him as θαυμάσιε, κάλλιστε νεανία, and responds with what emperors found it easiest to give, a court title (*patrikios*), confirmation of his grandfather's estates, appointment to rule the borders confirmed by chrysobull, and expensive imperial robes. Constantine Porphyrogennetos[76] and Kekaumenos[77] would both have been shocked, but the ceremonial exchanges of diplomatic letter-exchange and imperial reception (allowing for the setting where roles are reversed) could not in terms of contemporary experience have been more closely observed.

Another ceremony, that of *adventus*, is introduced into the *Timarion*, when the *doux* of Boleron-Strymon-Thessalonike, a member of the Doukas and Palaiologos families, enters Thessalonike for the *panegyris* of St Demetrios.[78] That this is relevant in the con-

[76] Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *De administrando imperio*, 13, ed. G. Moravcsik and R. Jenkins (DOT, 1, CHFB, 1, Washington, DC, 1967), 66-68.

[77] Kekaumenos, *Λόγος νουθετικὸς πρὸς βασιλέα*, 242-246, ed. B. Wassilewsky and V. Jernstedt, *Cecaumeni Strategicon et incerti scriptoris de officiis regiis libellus* (St Petersburg, 1896), 95-97.

[78] *Timarion*, ch. 7-10, ed. R. Romano, *Ps-Luciano, Timarione. testo critico, introduzione, traduzione, commentario e lessico* (Byz-NeohellNap, 2, Naples, 1974),

text of imperial image-making needs to be argued, but it can be done. Not only is the imperial governor in a city a representative of the emperor, but also it is constantly assumed,[79] with the support of *parainesis*,[80] that the aristocracy merely aped style set by the emperor. Little is known of the ceremony of *adventus* in the early twelfth century although it will be important under Manuel particularly in the case of Antioch.[81] Here traces of late antique *adventus* may be seen in the immobility and tranquillity of the governor, the waiting populace and the divine personages.[82]

Alexios spent much of his reign on campaign and himself entered Thessalonike several times.[83] The episode of the *doux* cannot

55.174-59. 290; M. Alexiou, 'Literary subversion and the aristocracy in twelfth-century Byzantium: a stylistic analysis of the Timarion (ch. 6-10)', *BMGS*, 8 (1982-1983), 29-45.

[79] This assumption underlies much of *The Byzantine aristocracy, IX-XIII centuries*, ed. M.J. Angold (BAR Int.ser., 221, Oxford, 1984).

[80] Kekaumenos, *To the emperor*, 251, ed. Wassilewsky and Jernstedt, 99-100.

[81] E.g. John Kinnamos, *Ἐπιτομὴ τῶν κατορθωμάτων*, IV.21, ed. A. Meineke (CSHB, Bonn, 1836), 186-188. tr. C. Brand, *The deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus* (New York, 1976), 142-143; Niketas Choniates, *Χρονικὴ διήγησις*, ed. J.-L. van Dieten (CFHB, 11/1, Berlin and New York, 1975), 108-110, tr. H.J. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates* (BBT, Detroit, 1984), 61-63.

[82] S.G. McCormack, *Art and ceremony in late antiquity* (The transformation of the classical heritage, 1, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1981), 17-89. For middle Byzantine evidence of immobility see H. Maguire, 'Style and ideology in Byzantine imperial art', *Gesta*, 28 (1989), 217-232 at 214. Two cautions should be observed, that of M. McCormick, 'Analysing imperial ceremonies', *JÖB*, 35 (1985), 1-20 on reconstruction from partial evidence and of T. Mathews, *The clash of gods* (Princeton, 1995), ch. 1 on an unthinking invocation of *adventus* for every entry. But see M. McCormick, *Eternal victory. triumphal rulership in late antiquity. Byzantium and the early medieval west* (P&PP, Cambridge, 1986), 254-255 on *adventus* and *profectio* ceremonies for officials in the provinces.

[83] For example in 1081, *Al.*,IV.iv.5, L, I, 152, S, 142, 1083: after 23 April he saw a vision of St Demetrios at the siege of Larissa and promised to enter the city on foot, *Al.*, V.v.6, L, II, 25-26, S, 169, which may have been fulfilled later that year, V.vii.4, L, II, 32, S, 173; September 1105, *Al.*, XII.iv.1, L, III, 64, S, 378; November 1106 to January 1107; he celebrated the memory of St Demetrios there on 25 January 1107, *Al.*, XII.iv.4, L, III, 66, S, 379-380, and wintered there again in 1107, *Al.*, XIII.ii.1, L, III, 92, S, 399; cf Theophylact, *On eunuchs*, ed. Gautier, *Théophylacte*, I, 291.19-20. On the iconography of St Demetrios and

be read as a simple subversion of the aristocracy without drawing the imperial image into comparison. What this passage does highlight is that a narrow definition of imperial ceremony is indeed inappropriate to the reign of Alexios: though we have seen a very traditional *basilikos logos*, and very traditional ceremonial hymnody, firmly rooted in the palace—and a poem even engaging with the wall of that palace—the ceremony of Alexios's reign involved far more: the ceremony of the synod, the tent, the street. To suggest that Alexios was not interested in ceremony is to ignore much of the evidence.

Theory and practice

One major and problematic genre of Alexios's reign remains, that of *parainesis*, advice. In an imperial context this is frequently described as the 'mirror for princes', a genre well known from the twelfth century in the medieval west and the renaissance.[84] Attempts to force this generic category on to Byzantine material have been less than satisfactory, masking the distinctive nature and broader typology of parainetic literature in general. Charlotte Roueché in the second volume of this work distinguishes parainetic works by function, tracing them to their ancient models, while demonstrating the interconnections with all traditions of *parainesis* and with various kinds of florilegia: so advice to young men,[85] advice to rulers,[86] advice of rulers to their sons,[87] are each distinguished from a more elaborate 'mirror' type.[88]

Alexios on coins see M.F. Hendy, *Coinage and Money 1081-1261* (DOS, 12, Washington, DC, 1969), 45-46.

[84] E.g. W. Blum, *Byzantinische Fürstenspiegel. Agapetos, Theophylakt von Ochrid, Thomas Magister* (Stuttgart, Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur, 14, 1981).

[85] An ancient model is Isokrates, *Πρὸς Δημονικόν*, ed. G. Norlin (London and New York, 1928), I, 4-34; for a Byzantine example see Kekaumenos, *Στρατηγικόν*, ed. B. Wassilewsky and V. Jernstedt, *Cecaumeni Strategicon et incerti scriptoris de officiis regiis libellus* (St Petersburg, 1896), 21-90.

[86] An ancient model is Isokrates, *Πρὸς Νικοκλέα*, ed. Norlin, I, 40-70; for a Byzantine example see Agapetos, *Ἐκθεσις κεφαλαίων παραινετικῶν*, *PG*, 86.1, 1163-1186.

[87] An ancient model is the Wisdom of Solomon; here belong the *Κεφαλαία παραινετικά* of 'Basil' to Leo VI, *PG*, 107, xxi-lvi; Photios, ep. 1, to Boris-Michael, ed. B. Laourdas and L.G. Westerink, *Photius. Epistulae et Amphilochia*,

The implications for Alexios's reign are interesting, and the obvious case is the *Paideia basilike*, which I have treated as one of the two *basilikoi logoi* of the reign. Hunger views it as a 'mirror' with two parts, panegyric and parainetic.[89] I have however shown that in its performance context it is closely parallel to the one undoubted *basilikos logos* to Alexios, and that it is panegyric which **includes**[90] *parainesis*. Where precisely do the differences lie between these two genres?

The *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* offers such a differentiation in terms of criticism as opposed to adulation.[91] I should prefer to see the difference more as between prescription and celebration or between the theory and the practice of kingship. *Parainesis* tells emperors what they should do, panegyric celebrates it when they have done it (or even when they haven't).[92] The difference is in the performance also: *parainesis* may be performed,[93] but the function

I (Leipzig, 1983), 2-39, Constantine Porphyrogennetos to Romanos as well as the *Mousai* and perhaps *Spaneas*.

[88] An ancient model: Xenophon, *Κυροῦ παιδεία*, ed. W. Miller, 2 vols (London and New York, 1914); a Byzantine example: Nikephoros Blemmydes, *Ἀνδριὰς βασιλικός*, ed. K. Emminger, *Studien zu den griechischen Fürstenspiegeln* (Munich, 1908); H. Hunger and I. Ševčenko, *Des Nikephoros Blemmydes Βασιλικὸς ἀνδρίας und dessen Metaphrase von Georgios Galesiotes und Georgios Oinaiotes. Ein weiteres Beitrag zum Verständnis der byzantinischen Schrift-Koine* (WByzSt, 18, Vienna, 1986).

[89] H. Hunger, *Geschichte der hochsprachlichen profaner Literatur der Byzantiner* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, 12.5.1, Munich, 1978), I, 161-162.

[90] For generic inclusion see F. Cairns, *Generic composition in Greek and Roman poetry* (Edinburgh, 1972), 158-176. I prefer this, as of more general utility in the analysis of Byzantine literature, to Günter Prinzing's concept of integration, 'Beobachtungen zu "integrierten" Fürstenspiegeln der Byzantiner', *JÖB*, 38 (1988), 1-31, which does however support my proposed relationship of the genres.

[91] *ODB* (New York and Oxford, 1991), II, 1379: 'Mirrors are distinct from basilikoi logoi because they offer elements of criticism rather than pure adulation.'

[92] That there is a parainetic function in much panegyric is undoubted, see below, 394-395.

[93] E.g. kingship orations, e.g. Synesios, *Εἰς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα περὶ βασιλείας*, ed. A. Garzya (Turin, 1989), 383-450; for a model see J.L. Moles, 'The kingship

of panegyric is to be performed, on an occasion at a given political moment. *Parainesis* is timeless, though it develops and is subject to fashion, and was becoming extremely popular in the eleventh century.

There is no space here for the detailed analysis of the *Paideia basilike* as *parainesis* and as 'advice to a ruler' in particular. Many elements are of course traditional and can be found in Agapetos, the advice to Leo attributed to Basil and Photios's letter to Boris-Michael.[94] The essence of Byzantine advice is its lists, which are cumulative rather than structured—72 gnomai in Agapetos, 66 in Basil, 113 in Photios—and its closeness to the florilegia tradition. Twelfth-century panegyric on the other hand conforms fairly closely to the Menandrian pattern[95] with accretions from court acclamation and some early borrowings from the advice tradition, for example philanthropia.[96] What must be noted is that *parainesis* and panegyric deal with different things. *Parainesis* is concerned with the *eusebes basileus*, and stresses the Christian virtues, familiar also from the apophthegmata tradition, which enable an emperor to rule well: until he can control himself and his passions he cannot control his kingdom. Panegyric shows less impact of Christianity: *patris* and *genos*, *genesis* and *paideia*, the cardinal virtues of *andreia* and *dikaiosyne*, *phronesis* and *sophrosyne*, *praxeis* in war and in peace, and *synkrisis* with the great, still in this period. form the fundamental subject-matter of the speech to the emperor

I cannot here survey the sudden flurry of parainetic material during the reign of Alexios, and, as evidenced by Kekaumenos

orations of Dio Chrysostom', *Papers of the Leeds Latin Seminar*, 6 (1990), 297-375.

[94] See the groundwork of K. Praechter, 'Antike Quellen des Theophylaktos von Bulgarien', *BZ*, 1 (1892), 399-414.

[95] It must always be emphasised that we do not know whether Menander Rhetor was the handbook used by most Byzantines; it can be said however that whatever was used must have been very like it.

[96] Magdalino, *Empire*, 416-418. Charlotte Roueché reminds me of the influence on and of florilegia also here; hagiography is another genre affected by these crosscurrents between panegyric and *parainesis*.

and the *Mousai,* in the decades on either side of his reign.[97] What I should like to look at is two pieces of included *parainesis,* the speech of Digenes Akrites to the emperor in the Grottaferrata version and the advice of Cyril Phileotes to Alexios in chapter 47 of Nicholas Kataskepenos's *Life.*

In the *Life* Alexios, having sent a relative to visit first and then made a family outing, goes through the ceremonial of greeting a holy man and is immediately forced to justify his presence: 'Why have you come here, εὐσεβέστατε βασιλεῦ?' Alexios replies that the lesser is enhanced by contact with the greater and that God has given him such a large empire and he is pressed day and night by such cares that he frequently forgets about God. Far from it, says the saint: 'You constantly think about God. The care of affirming our faith, our churches and monasteries and the world given you by God, this is an effort of the heart to think about God.' The emperor then tries another confession: 'I am a man so given up to pleasure, glory and the love of money, how can I get free and please the Lord?' The saint responds with an account of the family of vices and of the temptation of Christ and then offers very familiar advice.[98]

The two sections, 4 and 5, of advice lead on from the model of our Lord: 'Learn from me who am gentle and humble of heart and you will find rest for your souls.' But we are quickly in a different world: a perfect emperor keeps his friends by gifts; by benefits he transforms his enemies into friends.[99] A diadem does not make the emperor wise; it is intelligence which rules.[100] An emperor resembles both God and man;[101] a true ruler is recognised not by outer trappings (purple, robes, diadem) but by imperial virtue.[102] If he is

[97] I do not for example deal here at all with the complications of *Spaneas,* or with florilegia like the *Melissa* of Anthony or ascetic poems like those of Philip the Solitary and Nicholas III Grammatikos, or the admonitory aspects of *Syntipas.*

[98] *VCyril,* ch. 47.1-3, ed. Sargologos, 225-228.

[99] *VCyril,* ch. 47.4, ed. Sargologos, 228, cf Agapetos, 39, *PG,* 86.1, 1175. A parallel to the begging-poem of Physopalamites suggests itself here.

[100] Cf *Mousai,* I, 140-164.

[101] Cf Agapetos, 21, *PG,* 86.1, 1172.

[102] Cf Basil, 29, *PG,* 107, xxxvi.

ruled by pleasures and a slave to desire he cannot rule properly.[103] He is truly emperor who masters his anger, envy and pleasure, who governs the sensual part of his soul and can judge with *dikaiosyne.* (*Dikaiosyne* distributes in equal parts according to merit.)[104] Imperial power is government which conforms to the laws.[105] If an emperor can control passion by reason, he can become the father of all his subjects.[106] The marks of a free spirit are loyalty, gentleness, *philanthropia, andreia, dike, sophrosyne,* condescension, generosity, ruling not by favour but judgement, and all the other sister-virtues. The mark of a slave spirit is to be in thrall to the passions and never to think a good thought. All these gnomai may be found in the theological and apophthegmatic traditions;[107] they are also characteristic of *parainesis* of the 'advice to a ruler' tradition.[108]

The passage in Digenes[109] is much shorter, only ten lines, but it equally alludes to parainetic material:

> I claim and I entreat your glory's power
> To love obedience, pity the poor,[110]
> Deliver from justice the oppressed,
> Accord forgiveness to unwilling faults,[111]
> Not to heed slanders,[112] accept no injustice,[113]
> Scatter the heretics, confirm the orthodox.
> These, master, are the arms of righteousness,

[103] Cf Photios, 53, ed. Laourdas and Westerink, 28.840.

[104] Cf Basil, 62, *PG,* 107, liii.

[105] Cf Agapetos, 27, *PG,* 86.1, 1172; Basil, 32, *PG,* 107, xxxvii; *Mousai,* I.68.

[106] Cf Agapetos, 55, *PG,* 86.1, 1179; Basil, 10, *PG,* 107, xxv.

[107] See the notes in Sargologos's edition, 228-229.

[108] For the pioneering work on the interpenetration of the traditions see I. Ševčenko, 'A neglected Byzantine source of Muscovite political ideology', *Harvard Slavic Studies,* 2 (1954), 141-179; P. Henry III, 'A mirror for Justinian: the ekthesis of Agapetus diaconus', *GRBS,* 8 (1967), 281-308.

[109] *Digenes Akrites,* IV, 1032, tr. Mavrogordato, 136-7. Prinzing rightly includes this in his corpus of 'integrierte Fürstenspiegel'.

[110] Cf Agapetos, 8, *PG,* 86.1, 1163; Basil, 34, *PG,* 107, xxxvii; Agapetos, 60, *PG,* 86.1, 1182.

[111] Cf Basil, 50, *PG,* 107, xlvii.

[112] Cf Basil, *PG,* 107, xlix.

[113] Cf Photios, 35, ed. Laourdas and Westerink, 24.714; Basil, 44, *PG,* 107, xliii; Photios, 46, ed. Laourdas and Westerink, 27.814.

With which you can overcome all your enemies.
For rule and kingship belong not to might;
Only God grants them and the Highest's right hand. [114]

The passage gains its sharpness from the accuracy of the generic mimicry, just as the interview of Cyril and Alexios represents, if not what did happen when they met, what ought to have happened. Both texts show a sense of generic precision and appropriateness.

What emerges from this study of advice and praise in the period is the certainty that genre determines what is advised or praised, and that the virtues of *parainesis* are not those of panegyric. There is one area at least of direct conflict: *eugeneia*. Panegyric praises a man for his illustrious birth; *parainesis* tells him that virtue is more important than grand ancestors and that the diadem is of little worth.[115] This should alert us to the dangers of charting changes in imperial image without taking account of genre. To argue (from *parainesis*) that pre-Alexian imperial images placed little weight on military prowess or high birth and (from panegyric) that the Komnenian imperial image stressed both[116] in itself proves nothing. To observe *eusebeia* in a parainetic or more generally ecclesiastical context is hardly surprising;[117] to detect it in a panegyric context would be more striking.

Emperor and emperors

This survey of the imperial literature has so far ignored an important feature of the first ten years of the reign. We have noted that both the speech to Constantine Doukas and the *basilikos logos* to Alexios have double addressees; but the picture is in fact more complicated. Anastasi[118] drew attention to certain passages of the

[114] Cf Agapetos, 1, *PG*, 86.1, 1164-1165.

[115] Menander rhetor, *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν*, 370.10, ed. D.A. Russell and N.G. Wilson, *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford, 1981), 80; Isokrates, *Eis Dem*, 7, ed. Norlin, 8; Agapetos, 4, *PG*, 86.1, 1165; Basil, 58, *PG*, 107, lii; *Mousai*, I, 140-164.

[116] E.g. A. Kazhdan, 'The aristocracy and the imperial ideal', *The Byzantine aristocracy*, 43-57.

[117] See Angold below, 413.

[118] R. Anastasi, 'Sul logo basilikos di Teofilatto per Alessio Comneno', *Orpheus*, 3 (1982), 358-362.

encomium to Anna Dalassene which suggest that a third imperial figure is evoked: 'she ensures your unity like branches from a single root'; there is mention of 'a powerful emperor after the most powerful emperor'.[119] Then we revert to the balance of power between Alexios and his mother: even when he is away he governs; when he is present he does not need to be,[120] but we then hear of emperors joyfully sharing power, like two great lights: as in *Ecclesiastes* two are better than one.[121] In the epilogue Theophylact says that we are happy to be ruled by two emperors and by such a pair.[122] On the face of it there is no need for any of these passages to refer to anyone but Anna, except perhaps for the root and branch imagery, but there are other passages in Alexios's first ten years which may be compared. Several of the discourses of Niketas of Ankara suggest a double imperial presence, and a male one; the military flavour of *On ordinations* and the idea of New Constantines, New Marcians does not suggest Alexios and his mother;[123] while John the Oxite's speech to the emperor is very definitely in the singular, in his resignation speech he uses the plural, and in his appreciation of Anna Dalassene in *Peri phyges* he addresses the *basileis* and calls her the μητέρα τῶν βασιλέων.[124]

There is of course a multiplicity of possibilities in the first decade of the reign. Alexios and Constantine may account for most of these references,[125] Alexios and Eirene others;[126] John after his coro-

[119] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 237.23-24: ἐκείνη καὶ τὴν ἕνωσιν ὑμῖν δίδωσι; 239.5: καὶ κραταιοῦ βασιλέως μετὰ βασιλέα τὸν κράτιστον.

[120] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 239.11-14: Διὰ ταύτην, κἂν μὴ παρῆτε, τοῖς πράγμασι πάρεστε, τὰς ἁπάντων γὰρ φροντίδας ὡς οὐδεὶς ἑνὸς ἀναδέχεται· κἂν παρῆτε, οὐ πάρεστε τῇ ταύτης μεγαλονοίᾳ τὸ πᾶν ἐπιτρέποντες.

[121] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 241.2-7.

[122] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 241.8-10.

[123] Niketas of Ankara, *On ordinations*, ed. Darrouzès, 176.10-11: μὴ μόνον ἐν πολέμοις κραταιούς, ἀλλὰ καὶ μᾶλλον εὐνομίᾳ κρατυνομένους; 206.13-14. This of course begs a gender issue which should perhaps be addressed.

[124] John the Oxite, Παραίτησις τοῦ αὐτοῦ θρόνου, ed. P. Gautier, 'Jean V l'Oxite, patriarche d'Antioche. Notice biographique', *REB*, 22 (1964), 140: εὔξεσθαι δὲ καὶ ὑπὲρ τῶν βασιλέων ἡμῶν τῶν ἁγίων; John the Oxite, Περὶ τῆς φυγῆς, ed. Gautier, 154: Ὦ βασιλεῖς, ὑμεῖς φιλόμαχοι, ὑμεῖς φιλόκοσμοι, ὑμεῖς φιλογέροντες...; 156: Σφόδρα ἐγὼ θαυμάζω τὴν μητέρα τῶν βασιλέων.

[125] E.g. the Niketas of Ankara speeches.

nation in 1092: Theophylact—despite his connections with Constantine—as a rhetor urges the inevitable in 1088, and Niketas of Ankara in 1092 offers special prayers for the boy.[127] Anastasi's suggestion that the two lights of the 1088 speech are Alexios and Isaac remains speculative. We know very little about Isaac except his fund-raising efforts for the Norman war and his heresy-hunting activities,[128] but it is clear that he could be referred to in imperial terms;[129] there is no need to assume he was formally associated with the throne. Nor need the fact that Anna Dalassene was never crowned *autokratorissa*[130] exclude her from the imagery of the 1088 speech; we have seen how strong is the maternal parallel.

Perhaps no certain conclusion may be drawn from all this except to note that *basileia* was widely spread around in the first ten years of Alexios's reign and that even where several emperors are acclaimed, Alexios clearly emerges as the one of most account.[131] Two pointers may be noted: firstly the ominous praise of Theophylact that Anna Dalassene has things so well under control that even when Alexios is around he need not be, and secondly the

[126] Though likely examples, e.g. *VBart*, ch. 3, AASS Sept VIII, 821: καὶ Ἀλεξίῳ καὶ Εἰρήνῃ τοῖς φιλοχρίστοις ἐντυχὼν βασιλεῦσιν, appear to date rather later than the first decade of the reign, if Shepard, above, 131, is correct about the dates of Civitot; John Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν*, XVIII.24.15-16, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst (CSHB, Bonn, 1897), III, 747 explains why.

[127] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 235.10-11: Τί μὴ τὸν βασιλέα υἱὸν καὶ βασιλέα γνωρίζεις, ἀλλ' ἀναδύῃ τὴν ποθουμένην ἀνάρρησιν; Niketas of Ankara, *On forbidden marriages*, ed. Darrouzès, 274.35: καὶ τῷ νεοβλάστῳ καὶ θεοστέπτῳ βασιλεῖ.

[128] See D.F.J. Leeson, *Imperial orthodoxy: heresy and politics during the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118)* (MA Diss., Belfast, 1987), 127, 143; for Isaac's brief, of minister for propaganda, see Al., IV.iv.1, L, I, 150-151, S, 140.

[129] E.g. *Al.*, V.ii.4, L, II, 11.27, S, 158; Theophylact, ep. 73, ed. Gautier, 389.22-23. *Basileia* here is also applied to the caesar Nikephoros Melissenos, which led S. Maslev, 'Les lettres de Théophylacte de Bulgarie à Nicéphore Melissénos', *REB*, 30 (1972), 179-186, to misattribute the letter.

[130] Her official title was apparently *despoina*, see B.N. Hill, *Patriarchy and power in the Byzantine empire from Maria of Alania to Maria of Antioch, 1080-1180* (PhD Diss., Belfast, 1994), 74-78.

[131] E.g. Niketas of Ankara, *On ordinations*, ed. Darrouzès, 198.31-33; cf the ambiguity in *Timarion*, ch. 23, line 597-598: παρὰ τῷ βασιλεῖ; ch. 24, line 603: to›j basileàsi, ed. Romano, 70-71.

passage in John the Oxite's first speech where he complains that all Alexios's family are looking for an imperial life-style.[132]

When we turn to the period after 1090-1, the pattern is somewhat different. Either Alexios appears alone, or he appears with Eirene, or he appears with John, or he appears with both of them, or he appears with the whole family, but there is no sense of sharing authority with another. In the treaty of Devol, *basileis* signifies John and Alexios; it is interestingly the only case in the whole of the *Alexiad* when it does;[133] normally *basileis* signifies Alexios and Eirene (as in the reform coinage[134] and the Moscow leaf[135]) or exceptionally—at the Bogomil trial—Alexios and Isaac,[136] or in Anna's private lament for three emperors, Alexios, Eirene and Nikephoros.[137]

In Euthymios Zigabenos's second poem there is a family group of Alexios the sun, Eirene the moon and their desired offspring the porphyrogenitan son.[138] In Cyril Phileotes the emperor visits the saint πανοικί, with his whole family or household, a word picked up in the Zigabenos poems again.[139] In the collection of Nicholas Kallikles the emphasis is on family values, but this time not mediated through maternity: the presents of a daughter for her father, the memory of the favour of a father-in-law, the legitimation of a later ruler.[140] By now, it seems, Alexios had found a way of making the family support his own style of kingship.

[132] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 239.11-14; John the Oxite, Logos, ed. Gautier, 41.21-43.1: ἕκαστος γὰρ βασιλικῶς ζῆν τε καὶ εὐπορεῖν ἐθέλοντες...

[133] Al., XIII.xii, L, III, 125-139 at 127.3, 130.6, 133.4, 134.15, 137.13, S, 424-434.

[134] Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 39-49, 81-101, plate 6.1; below, II, plate 7.3.

[135] A.L. Saminsky, 'Neizvestnye Konstantinopol'skie miniatiury nachala Komninovskoi epokhi ', *Muzei*, 10 (1988), 175-197, at 178. (I am grateful to Jeffrey Anderson for advice, and hope to pursue it.)

[136] *Al.*, XV.viii.4, L, III, 221.4, S, 497-498.

[137] *Al.*, XIV.vii.6, III, 175.16, S, 460.

[138] Euthymios Zigabenos, poem 2. 23-35, *PG*, 130, 20.

[139] *VCyril*, ch. 47.1, ed. Sargologos, 225; Euthymios Zigabenos, poem 2.34: πανοικὶ σῴζων, παγγενῆ στέφων ἄνω.

[140] Nicholas Kallikles, poems 16 and 17, 19, 25, ed. Romano, 91, 92, 94, 102-103.

The sword and the cross

There is some uncertainty about this style: was it that of a military emperor? Kazhdan's convincing use of coin types[141] might point us in one direction, Magdalino's scrupulous use of the 1088 speech in another.[142] Theophylact of Ochrid is quite clear: Alexios did not lounge about in the capital and bath-houses but got out on campaign, doing what Kekaumenos said an emperor ought to do.[143] But the 1088 speech is very short in the *andreia* section, including negotiations with the Skyths and conversion of Turkish officers as well as the *philanthropia* and mercy of the emperor towards foes at home and abroad under this head. How is this to be interpreted? Menander suggests that if your subject is not strong in any particular it can simply be left out.[144] Is Alexios's courage here being impugned? A simple solution might be that the campaigns of 1087-8 were not a military success and it may be unnecessary to seek further—but it seems wise to look for evidence of Alexian *andreia* in the texts of the reign.

In contrast to the speech to Alexios, the speech to Constantine has been noted for its inclusion of war-like material:[145] Constantine is praised for his horsemanship and his skill with the lance and is told to lead campaigns himself, echoing Kekaumenos's emphasis on not staying in Constantinople, and the many references during the reign to manly campaigning as against effete bathing. John the

[141] A. Kazhdan and A. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (The transformation of the classical heritage, 7, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1985), 116.

[142] Magdalino, *Empire*, 418-419.

[143] Theophylact, or. 4, ed. Gautier, 207.14-18 advises the young emperor to lead armies himself and to eschew pleasures; or. 5, ed. Gautier, 233.24-235.2: Alexios relaxes after military campaigns not with horseracing and unmanly music but with hunting; Theophylact, ep. 127, ed. Gautier, *Théophylacte*, II, 579.118-126, contrasts the discomfort of campaign with the delights of the palace; Kekaumenos, ch. 259, ed. Wassilewsky and Jernstedt, 103 tells the emperor not to become immured in Constantinople; *Al.*, XII.iii.1, L, III, 59, S, 374 contrasts Alexios's distaste for the palace, a life of ease and baths with other emperors' avoidance of the front line.

[144] Menander, *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν*, ed. Russell and Wilson, 80: ἀφήσεις μὲν τοῦτο...

[145] Kazhdan, 'The aristocracy and the imperial ideal', 46.

Oxite and Manuel Straboromanos refer to victories, and the two poems attributed to Stephen Physopalamites celebrate them: the first treading down the columns of barbarians with sword and terrifying bow; the second presenting Alexios as a victorious lion.[146] In Niketas of Ankara's *On ordinations* the function of the emperor to defend the state and church is emphasised, and the emperors are praised for their interest and ability in both war and religion.[147] But it is clear that later in the reign victory imagery is more outspoken: it runs right through the prologue of Euthymios Zigabenos; Alexios is a *teichisma*, a *pyrgoma*, like Niketas's *alexema*, a triumphal column, and the deviser of innovations in siege warfare as well as the student of ancient *taktika*.[148] Nicholas Kallikles celebrates victories against Normans, Pechenegs and Turks, and the *Mousai* recalls episodes from war with the Normans, the Aegean reconquest and a near-miss in battle; weapons are prominent in this text.[149] Digenes's τὸ ὕψος τῆς ἀνδρείας emphasises his imperial qualities,[150] and the emperors evoked as role-models for Alexios are heroes of the battle-field: Constantine of course, but also John Tzimiskes and Basil II.[151] It is interesting to note the one mention of victory in the speech of 1088: it is in the section praising Anna Dalassene: it is her precious tears which brought Alexios a painless victory, her nocturnal sighs which assured him the

[146] John the Oxite, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 23.28-25.20; Manuel Straboromanos, or.1, ed., Gautier, 190.10-191.6; Stephen Physopalamites, poem 1.10-17; 1.20-21, ed. Welz, 54 ; poem 2.47, 53, 57, ed. Welz, 58-59.

[147] Niketas of Ankara, *On ordinations*, ed. Darrouzès, 176.1-11; 178.4.

[148] Euthymios Zigabenos, *PG*, 130, 20-21; cf. *Al.*, XI.ii.1, L, 10-11, S, 336; *Al.*, XV.iii.6, L, III, 198, S, 479.

[149] Nicholas Kallikles, poem 25, lines 13: τὴν Κελτικὴν ἀσπίδα βλέπει; 16: κυνῶν ὑλαγμὸς οὐδαμοῦ παριστρίων; 17: Περσῶν δὲ νευρᾶς ἠρέμησεν ὁ κτύπος; *Mousai*, e.g. I. 259: ἄνοπλος ὡς ἄφρακτος ἐκ πανοπλίας; 268-271: breastplate, shield and helmet; II. 51: αἴρει δέ σοι κράτιστος ἀγκὼν ἀσπίδα; 63: καί μοι κινεῖς εὖ καὶ φέρεις τὴν ἀσπίδα, both of these referring to John; 80-81: τὸ κράνος, τρωθὲν δι'αἰχμῆς Κελτικῆς περὶ Φθίαν...

[150] *Digenes Akrites*, IV, 1003, ed. Mavrogordato, 134.

[151] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 231.16-232.7; *Al.*, XIV.viii.7, L, III, 181, S, 466; Niketas of Ankara, *On ordinations*, ed. Darrouzès, 206.13-14; *Al.*, XIV.viii.3, L, III, 179, S, 464; XV.x.5, L, III, 229, S, 505; Kekaumenos, ch. 243-247, ed. Wassilewsky and Jernstedt, 95-98, perhaps even *Digenes*, IV, 973.

songs of victory, her prayers which crowned him with victory against the Skyths.[152] Here, and in Niketas of Ankara and Euthymios Zigabenos, we see a kind of sanitised militarism.

So the indications are that military prowess was valued in the reign and that Alexios's military valour was always acknowledged, but that it was downplayed in the early part of the reign, except in a securely ecclesiastical context, and that it continued to be true that the strongest statements of his military genius are in the most religious of settings. It still remains to be explained why Theophylact in particular downplayed his military skill in the 1088 speech, and this is best considered with the whole question of *Kaiserkritik*.

Subversion and propaganda

John the Oxite's speeches stand unparalleled in Byzantine literature as straightforward criticism of an emperor. Gautier comments on his frankness, finding parallels elsewhere in his writing and notes that he was very soon banished to his see.[153] Yet that see was Antioch, in which successive Komnenian emperors took a close interest,[154] and where Alexios was envisaging future activity. Is it not more likely that John was posted in order to establish a strong presence before the reconquest reached Syria? It is at any rate surely very unlikely that any bishop could have stood up in the presence of the emperor and criticised him in such strong terms, even when the empire was as enfeebled as in 1090-1091, unless the emperor knew he was going to do it, and knew what he was going to say.[155] Elsewhere he expresses Alexian views on monasticism; here he utters, with trenchant clarity, a programme for government: get rid of family members playing at being emperors, over-

[152] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 239.6-8.

[153] P. Gautier, 'Jean V l'Oxite, patriarche d'Antioche. Notice biographique', *REB*, 22 (1964), 129.

[154] R.J. Lilie, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten. Studien zur Politik des byzantinischen Reiches gegenüber den Staaten der Kreuzfahrer in Syrien und Palästina bis zum Vierten Kreuzzug (1096-1204)* (Munich, 1981), 1-2, 28, 54-59, 76-79, 82-86, 130-134; tr. J.C. Morris and J. Ridings, *Byzantium and the Crusader states*, 1096-1204 (Oxford, 1993), 2, 32, 61-66, 84-87, 91-94, 138-141.

[155] R. Morris, *Monks and laymen in Byzantium, 843-1118* (Cambridge, 1995), 268.

haul the administration and atone for the brutality of the sack of Constantinople. The new policy in action may be seen a year later than the new image, in the launch of the reconquest of spring 1092, the coronation of John on 1 September 1092, Alexios's financial reforms at the beginning of the new indiction in September 1092, and the fading from power of Anna Dalassene.[156]

The only other text of the period which carries the same sense of propaganda is the *Life* of Cyril Phileotes, written later but referring to interviews with Cyril during the reign of Alexios. Here the sense of court politics is overwhelming, not just the time-honoured function of a holy man to provide respectability and intelligence,[157] but the reflection of the rise and fall of careers. The appearance of the *sebastos* John in the cell of Cyril in the middle of a Black Mass must surely in the tradition of demonic *Kaiserkritik* suggest a black mark against John, and the poor press given to Eumathios Philokales is supported in other sources of the period.[158] But the interview with Alexios already discussed moves on from *parainesis* to remarkably specific praise of the emperor, notably for the *Orphanotropheion*, and for his conversions, especially of Skyths, and then

[156] For the sack of Constantinople see *Al.*, II.iv.4, L, I, 95, S, 98; Zonaras, XVIII.20.12-20, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 728.13-730.11; for financial reforms, M.F. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine monetary economy, c. 300-1450* (Cambridge, 1985), 513-517; for the reconquest, Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer*, 175-225; for Anna Dalassene, S. Runciman, 'The end of Anna Dalassena', *Mélanges H. Grégoire=Annuaire de l'institut de philologie et d'histoire orientale et slave*, 9 (1949), 517-524, dating the crisis to 1094.

[157] R. Morris, 'The political saint of the eleventh century', *The Byzantine saint*, ed. S. Hackel (Studies supplementary to *Sobornost*, 5, London, 1981), 43-50. Holy men accompanied Alexios on campaign in his youth (three different ones are known, Ignatios, *VCyril*, ch.47.11, ed. Sargologos, 234, Joannikios, *Al.*, I.viii.2, L, I, 32, S, 49; Symeon, Nikephoros Bryennios, *Ὕλη ἱστορίας*, IV.21, ed. P. Gautier, *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (CFHB, 9, Brussels, 1975), 289, see Sargologos, 460, n. 147. When Alexios was on his deathbed, Eirene recruited the assistance of 'all hermits living in caves or on mountains or leading their lives in solitude elsewhere', *Al.*, XV.xi.9, L, III, 234, S, 509.

[158] *VCyril*, ch. 53, ed. Sargologos, 249-255 for the *sebastos* John; for the identification with John Komnenos, son of the *sebastokrator* and the connection with the family row of 1093 see my *Theophylact*, ch. 2.6, n. 314; for Eumathios Philokales, *VCyril*, ch. 35, ed. Sargologos, 146-153, see Karlin-Hayter, above, 142.

'they talked for a long time of the salvation of the soul'. Then Alexios suddenly asks about the tenurial status of the monastery and offers it a chrysobull. The chapter closes with more anecdotal material about the faith, humility and generosity of the *pammakaristos basileus*. Officia and beneficia are seen to balance here.[159]

Another case where subversion has been detected is the *doux* episode in the *Timarion*.[160] I have suggested that this should be seen as a reflection of imperial values, but does this necessarily involve subversion of the emperor of the day? More obvious subversion of imperial achievement is contained elsewhere in the work, with the failed Romanos Diogenes dominating the landscape of Hades, and perhaps Theophilos with his attendant eunuch. The *doux* episode rather points up the contrast between the stern soldierly style of Komnenian generalship, visible while entering Thessalonike on campaign during the two Norman wars, and in reverent fulfilment of a vow, as against the flibbertigibbet princeling, conforming to the physical descriptions of the heroes of romance, with his horses shaking their trappings and Cupids, Muses and Graces[161] scampering in front. A similar contrast is seen in a letter of Theophylact of

[159] *VCyril*, ch. 47.6 (*Orphanotropheion*); 47.7 (conversions); 47.8 (chrysobull and departure), ed. Sargologos, 230-232.

[160] Alexiou, 'Literary subversion and the aristocracy', cf. B. Baldwin, *Timarion* (BTT, Detroit, 1984), 93; Alexiou's reading privileges erotic elements while missing the generic signals; Baldwin's sees the classical echoes without following through the evidence for subversion. I am indebted to Marie Taylor Davis for discussion of this passage.

[161] These replace the more solemn Tellus and Victoria of an imperial *adventus*, and suggest more the arrival of Aphrodite or a triumph of Dionysos, see *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae*, II.1 (Zurich and Munich, 1986), 557. (The Muses are the daughters of Dionysos in Nonnos.) In fact this combination of personages is found in epithalamia, Menander, *Περὶ ἐπιθαλαμίων*, ed. Russell and Wilson, 134-146 at 137, 143. Cf Claudian, *Epithalamium*, 72-75; 237, ed. M. Platnauer (London and New York, 1922) 240-267: Loves accompany Venus, the Graces decorate the marriage bed and the Muses have educated the bride. Contrast Komnenian examples e.g. Theodore Prodromos, poem XLIII, *ἐπὶ τῷ γάμῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πανυπερσεβάστου κυροῦ Νικηφόρου τοῦ Φορβηνοῦ κυροῦ Ἀλεξίου*, ed. W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte* (WByzSt, 11, Vienna, 1974), 399-403, emphasising at b1 and 24, ed. Hörandner, 400-401, his military qualities.

Ochrid describing a paragon of the local aristocracy with equal hyperbole, and referring to the tireless campaigning of the emperor in Macedonia.[162] Barbarians, as Theophylact had earlier pointed out, are not impressed by rulers dressed up as bridegrooms.[163]

But subversion of a very enjoyable kind is clearly present in *Digenes*. Not only would any modern emperor be at a loss compared with Basil, but that very Basil is unable to maintain his superiority over a hero who outclasses him in *andreia*, lectures him on *dikaiosyne*, offers him the very gift which exposes his rapacity, and frightens him off his throne with the wild behaviour which makes nonsense of the measured ceremony of the court-on-the-frontier. Just as Alexios was wrong-footed by the unexpected when a Kelt tried to sit on his throne, Digenes transgresses acceptable behaviour in the presence of an emperor and celebrates a victory—for the exiles.[164]

Careful reading of the two *basilikoi logoi* of the 1080s suggests that not all is 'adulatory' here. Not only is *andreia* played down in the speech to Alexios, as we have seen, but *dikaiosyne* is simply omitted apart from a comparison with Solomon. Several commentators have also noted that the emphasis on tyranny in the speech to Constantine feels dangerously close to the bone in the aftermath of the sack of Constantinople and the rumours about Alexios and Maria. The cases where what is advised in the *Paideia basilike* is praised in the 1088 speech only highlight the general lack of over-

[162] *Timarion*, ch. 7-9, ed. Romano, 55.179-59.267; cf. Theophylact, ep. 127, ed. Gautier, *Théophylacte*, II, 570-579; both the letter and the passage in *Timarion* deserve further analysis.

[163] An explanation for the Komnenian concern and an explanation of the epithalamic imagery of the *Timarion* passage may be found in Theophylact, or 4, ed. Gautier, I, 193.21-27: Μὴ δὲ νόμιζέ σοι τὴν κατάχρυσον καὶ περιπόρφυρον τήβενναν ὑπαγαγεῖν ἄνδρας θεράποντας Ἄρεος, ἄνδρας δεινὸν δερκομένους καὶ λεοντῶδες εἰ μή σε καὶ χαλκεοθώρακα βλέποιεν καὶ αὐτουργοῦντα τὸν πόλεμον· οὐ γὰρ ἐκπλήττεται βάρβαρος ὁρῶν νυμφικῶς ἐστολισμένον τὸν αὐτοκράτορα, ἀλλὰ καταγελᾷ χρυσοφοροῦντος ὡς παιδαρίου καὶ διαπαίζων ὡς μαλακόν τε καὶ ἄναλκιν οἴεται δικαίως ὡς οὐδὲ κονδύλου πρὸς τὸν φόνον τούτου δεήσεται.

[164] *Digenes Akrites*, IV. 1054, ed. Mavrogordato, 138 ; cf. *Al.*, X.x.6, L, II, 229, S, 325; see Shepard above, xxx, on the dangers of the personal approach.

lap between the two; the element of advice to the boy-emperor underlines the inadequacies of his obvious role-model.[165]

So it can be argued that all is not what it seems in the Alexian literature of praise and blame, and that apparently subversive or encomiastic texts may have served the opposite function.[166] But they certainly highlight the areas where Alexios was most in need of the rhetor's art. His military art was acknowledged, his foxy *phronesis* praised in unexpected contexts,[167] his *sophrosyne* bolstered with his almsgiving, his world-wide patronage and the *Orphanotropheion*. That *dikaiosyne* was Alexios's weak point stands out from Theophylact in 1088, from John the Oxite in 1090-1091, perhaps even from Digenes, and his need to demonstrate repentance and make expiation for the rape of Constantinople shines through the image-making of the years after the vicarious piety of Anna Dalassene had worn thin. At the very end of his reign and life, *dikaiosyne* is the subject of Nicholas Kallikles's poem on the Second Coming: Alexios turns it against an unjust judge (and one need go no further than Mouzalon[168] to see that criticism of some of his officials was justified), but is Kallikles turning it against Alexios? Is it really impossible in imperial literature to criticise the laudandus?

[165] Theophylact, or. 5, ed. Gautier, 233-4 for the Solomon (not always whiter than white in Byzantine tradition) synkrisis; or. 4, ed. Gautier, 195.21-199.21, esp. 195.21-23 for the city taken σφαγαῖς τε καὶ αἵμασι; what follows, to 197.17, should be compared with John the Oxite, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 29-35.

[166] For a warning, and on the complexity of the reception of imperial images in the late twelfth century, see A. Eastmond, 'An intentional error? Imperial art and "mis"interpretation under Andronikos I Komnenos', *ArtB*, 76.3 (1994), 502-510; the value of this excellent argument is not undermined by the possibility that his prime case is not an imperial image at all; it was after all viewed as such. The question remains whether the sophistication of reading which he demonstrates in late twelfth-century audiences was at all unusual in Byzantium.

[167] E.g. Euthymios Zigabenos, *Prologos*, *PG*, 130, 20D: ἀποκρίσεις περιεσκεμμέναι, καὶ ἀγχινοίαι μεσταὶ πρὸς τοὺς πρέσβεις τῶν μεγάλων ἐθνῶν.

[168] Nicholas Mouzalon, *Paraitesis*, ed. S. Doanidou, ' Ἡ παραίτησις Νικολάου Μουζαλόνος ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Κύπρου. Ἀνέκδοτον ἀπολογητικὸν ποίημα', *Ἑλληνικά*, 7 (1934), 109-150; on which see Karlin-Hayter, above, 143-144. Cf also *Mousai*, I, 372-385.

The Alexian image

Kekaumenos advised emperors to hold fast to the four virtues,[169] and our texts do this. But we have seen that they also emphasise others, notably *philanthropia* and *eusebeia*, and the apophthegmatic virtues of patience, self-control, modesty, which point to the paradigmatic pious emperor of the advice literature. We have also seen that the image-making of the reign must be seen as a developing series of attempts at damage-limitation after the unfortunate sack of Constantinople. An early solution relied on maternal *philomonachia* and family values, and we have seen this in the literature of the 1080s. This solution gave way to a new image[170] ten years later, to go with the new policy of reconquest and reform, when Alexios drew matters more into his own hands and the *Orphanotropheion* and *eleemosyne* and entertaining epileptics became the favoured stance. Ten more years on, yet another shift is possible: just as *andreia* in the parainetic literature is twinned with *phronesis*, so Alexios's military achievements are seen in tandem with his war on heresy, once Alexios succeeded to Isaac's place in these affairs.[171] The confrontational nature of the Bogomil affair and the set-piece disputations of the last decade of the reign required an armoury of arguments and imperial imagery, both of which were supplied by Zigabenos. Some of these shifts of emphasis in Alexios's imperial image may be seen also in his coinage where the early types, either inherited[172] or specially devised for the first

[169] Kekaumenos, ch. 251, ed. Wassilewsky and Jernstedt, 99-100.

[170] Note the attractive theory of Saminsky, 'Neizvestnye Konstantinopol'skie miniatury', 175-197 that the Moscow and Freer Gospel book with the portrait of Alexios and Eirene and the Maundy Thursday cycle was produced for the decennalia of accession and sack in 1091.

[171] Isaac died between 1102 and 1104, see D. Papachryssanthou, 'La date de la mort du sébastocrator Isaac Comnène, frère d'Alexis I, et de quelques événements contemporains', *REB*, 21 (1963), 250-255.

[172] E.g. the only portrait of Alexios in military garb, below, II, plate 7.1, Hendy, *Coinage and money*, plate 2.13, which is very close to those of predecessors like Constantine Monomachos and so not the best argument for a new military image.

Norman war,[173] give way to the coronation issue with the coronation of John and the double portrait of Alexios and Eirene[174] and then the post-reform standard full-figure portrait of Alexios alone,[175] with another Thessalonican type for the second Norman war.[176] Only the war against heresy finds no place in the conservatism of the coinage.[177]

We have seen in the literature of Alexios's reign the strengths and weaknesses of Alexios's position as well as the materials available—within generic expectations and the constraints of expense[178]—to the image-makers. It was a rounded picture they[179] presented, though by the middle of the twelfth century it had already fragmented, as Alexios's children and associates chose from this picture only the dimension they themselves favoured: the soldier, the thirteenth apostle, the friend of monks.

Imperial portraits inevitably tend to the impersonal, but of all rulers Alexios's was a personal rule. No emperor recruited his family more ruthlessly for both reality[180] and image, no emperor had explored so widely the potential of accessibility[181] and of different personal relations: the adoptive relationship,[182] the relation of spiritual father to son,[183] the possibilities of personal ties which

[173] The St Demetrios type, below II, plate 7.2, Hendy, plate 1.9, clearly belongs to the Thessalonike mint during this period, an indicator of civic patriotism rather than of a military patron.

[174] Below, II, plate 7.3; Hendy, plate 6.1.

[175] Below, II, plate 7.4; Hendy, plates 3-5.

[176] Below, II, plate 7.5; Hendy, plate 6.9. Not all show the comet of *Al.*, XII.iv.1, L, III, 64, S, 378.

[177] This is perhaps curious, since in the imperial mediation theory of J. Elsner, *Art and the Roman viewer: the transformation of art from the pagan world to Christianity* (Cambridge, 1995), 188-189, a step down closer to other men might have required a visible and balancing step up closer to God, but after all conservatism is unsurprising in terms of coin iconography.

[178] See Armstrong, above, 231, for a sense of good husbandry.

[179] See above, n. 126, for the only hint we are given as to the image-maker.

[180] See Hill and Magdalino above, 47-48; 152-155.

[181] See Manuel Straboromanos, *Logos*, ed. Gautier, 182.32-183.14: πρῳότατε βασιλεῦ.

[182] R. Macrides, 'Kinship by arrangement', *DOP*, 44 (1990), 109-118.

[183] See Armstrong above, 230-231; Morris, 'The political saint of the eleventh century'; n. 154 above.

could be understood by Kelts.[184] *Parainesis* frequently deals with friendship, its place, its advantages, its maintenance.[185] Alexios appears to have demanded further enlightenment, for most manuscripts of *Stephanites and Ichnelates* record that it was translated into Greek by Symeon Seth at the request of Alexios.[186] This work, on the one hand a tribute to the growing public for fiction, also shows the continuing popularity of advice literature. Within the frame of the intercourse of king and philosopher, and using animal fables and popular tales, it deals with issues of personal relations as they apply to rulers: how a deceitful and wicked man changes friendship between people to enmity, how those who love properly stick to their own friends, how true friendship may be recognised.[187] But it is also a work of the world of Kekaumenos: the fourth fable is 'how one should keep an eye on the enemy even when he shows good will.'[188] When questioned on how it is possible for the king to guard his house, the philosopher replies that *phronesis* is necessary, and good counsellors.[189] And a passage towards the end demonstrates to the emperor the nature of personal relations as operated by a ruler: a sensible person, says the philosopher, regards his parents as friends, his brothers as companions, his womenfolk as acquaintances, children as reminders, concubines as trouble-makers, kinsmen as creditors, and himself as a solitary.[190]

[184] See Shepard above, 105-113.

[185] E.g. Theophylact, or. 4, ed. Gautier, 201.24-203.25.

[186] L.-O. Sjöberg, *Stephanites und Ichnelates. Überlieferung, Geschichte und Text* (Studia graeca Upsaliensia, 2, Stockholm, 1962), 151.

[187] *Τὰ κατὰ Στεφανίτην καὶ Ἰχνηλάτην*, I, III, ed. Sjöberg, *Stephanites und Ichnelates*, 151-190; 201-214.

[188] *Stephanites and Ichnelates*, IV, ed. Sjöberg, 215-227.

[189] *Stephanites and Ichnelates*, VII.124, ed. Sjöberg, 235.1-6.

[190] *Stephanites and Ichnelates*, VIII. 133a, ed. Sjöberg, 243.15-244.3.

18

Alexios I Komnenos: an afterword

Michael Angold

The contributors to this volume are divided about the nature of Alexios's achievement. The majority—with some reluctance—agree by and large with the assessment of Anna Komnene: that Alexios was a powerful and successful ruler, who rescued the Byzantine Empire from internal conflict and foreign invasion and laid the foundations for a new political system. But others are more sceptical. Ludwig Burgmann notes that Alexios was not a great legislator; Pamela Armstrong that he was not the founder of monasteries; and Lyn Rodley that he was not a great patron of the arts. Nor was he a patron of literature to judge from the way Roderick Beaton and Catia Galatariotou simply ignore him. It is possible for an emperor to be none of these and still be a great ruler. One thinks of Basil II. Jonathan Shepard reminds us that Alexios was first and foremost a field commander. It was his military background which informed his shaping and conduct of foreign policy.[1] This is a valuable insight into Alexios's character which can be further developed.

The problem has always been how to escape from the constraints imposed in the *Alexiad*. Its defects as history have long been known. The chronology is muddled and deliberately misleading. Despite protestations to the contrary Anna Komnene omits much that was detrimental to her father's reputation. Yet the main lines of her portrait of an age have rarely been challenged. This is certainly not what James Howard-Johnston has set out to

[1] See above, Shepard, 92-101.

do in a study, which will surely be a talking point for some time to come. His concern is to follow the methods of composition that underpin the *Alexiad*. His starting point is Anna Komnene's admission that she relied on a 'half-finished and hurriedly put together work' devoted to the reign of her father which her husband the caesar Nikephoros Bryennios had brought back from campaign in the east at the end of his life.[2] Howard-Johnston sets out to isolate Bryennios's contribution to the *Alexiad*. His conclusion is that it was substantial and that Anna Komnene's role was limited to filling in the gaps. His claims to have found diagnostic elements that point to the passages penned by Bryennios. It is brilliantly plausible. It does make sense that Bryennios contributed the emphasis on warfare that is a feature in the *Alexiad*. However, in these days of a computer on every desk, intuitions of this kind can be tested by more sophisticated techniques of linguistic and textual analysis. We shall just have to wait. It is quite exciting. In the meanwhile, it is still not clear what difference a possibly larger input on Bryennios's part makes to the *Alexiad* as a judgement on Alexios I Komnenos and his reign. Does it matter whether Bryennios was a glorified research assistant or possibly the controlling intelligence behind the *Alexiad*? Contemporaries and near contemporaries were convinced that Anna Komnene was the more powerful personality.[3] In matters of interpretation and historical judgement her views were likely to prevail. The problem of how to get behind the *Alexiad* still remains. The obvious way is to work from John Zonaras's *Epitome historion*, which is an independent source for Alexios's reign. The late Paul Lemerle's highly critical assessment of Alexios Komnenos depends almost entirely on Zonaras, down to the charge that he was 'faible devant les femmes'.[4] Contributors to this volume have been more critical of Zonaras. This is a tribute to Paul Magdalino, who has shown that Zonaras's

[2] Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, Pref. iii, 4; ed. B. Leib, 3 vols (Paris, 1937-1945), I, 6.14-16, tr. E. Sewter, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena* (Harmondsworth, 1988), 20.

[3] John Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν*, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst (CSHB, Bonn, 1897), III, 754.11-16; Niketas Choniates, *Χρονικὴ διήγησις*, ed. J. A. van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae historia* (CFHB, 11/1, Berlin and New York, 1975), 10-11.

[4] P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Le monde byzantin, Paris, 1977), 295-312.

account of Alexios Komnenos's reign is as tendentious as that of the *Alexiad*. Zonaras was tapping a vein of *Kaiserkritik*, which was wedded to an unrealistic and antiquarian ideal of imperial authority. He was looking back to the Augustan settlement.[5] Nevertheless, modern historians have accepted his main charges against Alexios I Komnenos: that he acted not as a steward but as a landlord; that he confused public property with private rights; more concretely, that he imposed a new hierarchy of ranks for his immediate family and that he lavished revenues and palaces on them. It is difficult to refute these accusations: there is plenty of corroborative evidence, including that provided by Anna Komnene.[6] It is simply a matter of interpretation: Anna approved, whilst Zonaras disapproved. Modern historians have noted his criticism of Alexios Komnenos, but have avoided any direct assessment of the historical worth of the section he devoted to Alexios's reign. There are obvious reasons for neglecting Zonaras. So little is known about him, despite the fact that he was a major canon lawyer.[7] The exact circumstances in which he wrote his *Epitome historion* cannot be recovered. A passing reference to the 'late porphyrogenitan emperor',[8] meaning John II Komnenos, indicates that it was written in the reign of Manuel I Komnenos, but it is just an assumption that it was intended as a riposte to the *Alexiad*.

While the elements of *Kaiserkritik* in Zonaras's *History* have attracted considerable interest, his account of Alexios's reign has rarely been considered as a whole. In terms of information it adds relatively little to the *Alexiad*. It concentrates on much the same episodes, but at shorter length. It also follows roughly the same order of events as the *Alexiad*: until, that is, the First Crusade. Thereafter they diverge. Zonaras places the Bogomil trial immediately after his account of the First Crusade; followed by the Cuman invasion; the reform of the *Orphanotropheion*; the Anemas conspiracy; the Empress Eirene Doukaina and family matters; Bohemond's invasion of 1107-8; Alexios's serious illness and convalescence under the empress's supervision; campaigns against the Turks; Alexios's last illness and the struggle for the throne; an estimate of Alexios as man and emperor. In the *Alexiad*, by way of contrast, after a detailed account of the First Crusade and the establishment of crusader states comes the threat from Bohemond and the Anemas conspiracy; followed by Alexios's victory over Bohemond; a campaign against the Turks; a Cuman invasion; the foundation of the *Orphanotropheion*; the trial of Basil the Bogomil; the emperor's last illness.

[5] P. Magdalino, 'Aspects of twelfth-century Byzantine *Kaiserkritik*', *Speculum*, 58 (1983), 330-333.

[6] *Alexiad*, III.iv.1-3, L, I, 113-115, S, 111-112.

[7] *ODB*, III, 2229, cf. T. Fischer, *The thought gang* (Edinburgh, 1994), 50: 'he had it easy being a twelfth-century Byzantine bureaucrat'.

[8] Zonaras, XVIII.28.21, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst (CSHB, Bonn, 1897), III, 762.11.

There is an obvious discrepancy over the refoundation of the *Orphanotropheion* and the trial of Basil the Bogomil. Anna Komnene notoriously crams both events into the very last years of her father's reign. She was being deliberately misleading. The trial of Basil the Bogomil has to be placed around the year 1100 because Alexios's brother Isaac played a significant role in its early stages and he was dead by 1104.[9] Zonaras places the trial soon after the passage of the First Crusade, which must be roughly accurate. Anna Komnene associates her father's reform of the *Orphanotropheion* with his last campaign against the Turks in 1116. But as Paul Magdalino has indicated, the reform of the *Orphanotropheion* can be dated to the mid-1090s.[10] Zonaras places it after the crusade and the trial of Basil the Bogomil, but significantly interposes a Cuman invasion. This can be dated to 1095, because of the mention of a pretender claiming to be a son of the Emperor Romanos Diogenes.[11] In other words, Zonaras is a much better guide to the events of the last part of Alexios's reign than Anna Komnene is.

This is very surprising, since Anna has every opportunity to be well informed about this phase of her father's reign. She was no longer a young girl, but a person of some consequence, close to the centre of power. Her husband was even for a time in charge of the government[12] Anna Komnene's falsification of the last part of her

[9] D. Papachryssanthou,'La date de la mort du sébastocrator Isaac Comnène, frère d'Alexis I, et de quelques événements contemporains', *REB*, 21 (1963), 250-255.

[10] See above, 157.

[11] M. Mathieu, 'Les faux Diogènes', *B*, 22 (1952), 133-148.

[12] Zonaras, XVIII.26.14, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst, III, 754.6-10.

father's reign cannot therefore be attributed to ignorance. In that case, what was her purpose? Protecting her father's reputation must have played some part. By shifting the refoundation of the *Orphanotropheion* and the Bogomil trial to the very end of her father's reign, Anna Komnene was able to bring it to triumphant conclusion. It showed her father in his most glorious role as the protector of orthodoxy: as the thirteenth apostle.[13] It was also a way of masking the role she and her husband played in the last—and increasingly depressing—years of Alexios's reign. They were years of failure which threatened his earlier triumphs. The contrast may help to explain the mixed press that Alexios has received, but it has been little explored by modern historians.

Bohemond's capitulation at Devol in 1108 was Alexios's last major success, but it was a Pyrrhic victory. He had been forced to evacuate his troops from Cilicia to meet Bohemond's invasion. As a result, he was unable to capitalise on the terms of the treaty of Devol. There was no compelling need for Tancred, Bohemond's nephew and successor at Antioch, to honour them. In the face of Tancred's intransigence over Antioch Alexios elaborated his most ambitious undertaking. He aimed at the subjugation of the Crusader states. His diplomacy included *démarches* to the papacy, to Pisa and Genoa, to the barons of Norman Apulia (Langobardia, as the Byzantines still called it), and to the Caliph at Baghdad.[14] It anticipated some of Manuel I Komnenos's schemes and may well have served as a model. It came to nothing. The reason seems to have a dangerous illness that attacked Alexios at the crucial moment. In May 1112 he was writing to Abbot Gerard of Monte Cassino to inform him of a change of plan. He had intended to visit Dyrrachium to negotiate an alliance with the counts of Langobardia.[15] This was no longer possible because of the serious illness he had suffered. Anna Komnene mentions in passing that her father suffered chronic rheumatism (or possibly gout) during his last years, which she connected with the ingratitude of her brother

[13] *Al.*, XIV.viii.8, L, III, 181.20-25, S, 466.
[14] R.-J. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader states 1096-1204* (Oxford, 1993), 83-94.
[15] F. Trinchera, *Syllabus Graecarum membranarum* (Naples, 1865), no. lxi.

John,[16] but this was very different from the illness that Zonaras describes at length. It was so serious that Alexios's life was despaired of. As a last resort they draped his sickbed with the veil that shrouded the icon of the Chalke Soter. He made a miraculous recovery, but there was general disbelief, which his appearance on horseback in the Agora failed to dispel. The whole of Constantinople, including members of the imperial court and family, was still convinced that he would not live beyond Easter Sunday, much to the emperor's dismay. Zonaras places this illness immediately after the installation of John Agapetos as patriarch of Constantinople on 24 May 1111.[17] This detail combined with the letter to Abbot Gerard allows us to date Alexios's illness to around the beginning of 1112.

Needless to say, Alexios survived, but why should Zonaras have singled out this illness as a major episode, while Anna Komnene ignored it? Almost certainly because it was central to the struggle over the succession which set Anna and her mother Eirene Doukaina against her brother John Komnenos. Anna Komnene prefers to say as little as she can about the struggle, which ended in her humiliation. Alexios's original intention was that John Komnenos should succeed him. To this end Alexios had him crowned emperor in Hagia Sophia in 1092, when still a child of five.[18] At the treaty of Devol Bohemond swore allegiance to both Alexios and his son the *basileus* John.[19] In 1111 Alexios persuaded the dying patriarch Nicholas Grammatikos to bless his son's succession to the throne.[20] But after years of ignoring Eirene Doukaina he came to rely on her more and more heavily. When he fell ill, Eirene Doukaina took over the reins of power. Alexios apparently intended that in the event of his death she would administer the Empire with John Komnenos subordinate to her.[21] Zonaras's chro-

[16] *Al.*, XIV.iv.8-9, L, III, 163-164, S, 452.
[17] Zonaras, XVIII.25.9, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 751-752.
[18] K. Barzos, *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, 2 vols (Thessalonike, 1984), I, 178 n.13.
[19] *Al.*, XIII.xii.2-4, 15, 27, L, III, 126-127, 132.8-9, S, 424, 425, 429.
[20] P. Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster* (Leipzig, 1894), 178.
[21] Zonaras, XVIII.24.15-17, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 747.6-19.

nology is at this point less than clear. He tells us only that John had been married for some time and was already the father of children.[22] John Komnenos was married in 1104/5. By 1111 he had four children.[23] There is therefore a very good chance that the concession to Eirene Doukaina was made during the illness of 1112. By appointing his empress regent in the event of his death Alexios was following the precedent established by Constantine X Doukas for Eudokia Makrembolitissa.[24] This was something that John could not be expected to endure. He knew that his mother favoured the succession of Anna Komnene and her husband Nikephoros Bryennios. He therefore set about building support for himself, but the empress learnt about this and had him isolated.[25] The severe illness that struck Alexios down in 1112 provided the occasion that allowed the succession struggle to come out into the open.

After his recovery from the illness Alexios made an effort to reassert himself. He left Constantinople for the Thracian Chersonese, but taking the Empress and the *gynaikonitis* with him.[26] According to Zonaras his time was taken up inspecting his troops; according to Anna Komnene her father was using the Chersonese as a base from which to survey the various trouble spots of the Empire.[27] Eirene fell ill and asked to be allowed to return to the capital. Alexios must have had his suspicions because, as soon as he heard that she had arrived, he hastened back to Constantinople in a single day.[28] At a conservative estimate this must have been a journey of sixty miles or more. That autumn he left the capital once again and established camp on Mt Papikion, again taking Eirene Doukaina and the *gynaikonitis* with him.[29] Alexios was in some ways reverting to the style of government earlier in his reign, when he

[22] Zonaras, XVIII.24.18, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 748.1-3.
[23] Barzos, *Γενεαλογία Κομνηνῶν*, I, no. 34.
[24] N. Oikonomides, 'Le serment de l'impératrice Eudocie (1067). Un épisode de l'histoire dynastique de Byzance', *REB*, 21 (1963), 101-128.
[25] Zonaras, XVIII.24.19-23, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 748.3-15.
[26] Zonaras, XVIII.25.26, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 752.10-13.
[27] *Al.*, XIV.iii.3, L, III, 60-63, S,445.
[28] Zonaras, XVIII.26.4, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 752-753.
[29] Zonaras, XVIII.26.9, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 753.13-15.

spent long periods away from Constantinople. But his insistence that he was followed by the Empress and the *gynaikonitis* is strange. Anna Komnene explains it by their mutual devotion.[30] This is as may be, but it was also a way of keeping an eye on her. By having her by his side he ensured that she did not gain control over the machinery of government, in the manner of his mother.

Earlier in his reign Alexios had relied on his mother and his brother, the *sebastokrator* Isaac, to maintain control over the administration and the capital. Their death within a couple of years of each other at the beginning of the twelfth century was a real blow. I would be inclined to connect the increasing prominence of the logothete of the *sekreta* – noted by Paul Magdalino – with the need to fill the gap left by their deaths. The *sebastos* Michael seems to have done this effectively until he disappears from the scene soon after the victory over Bohemond. Thereafter, as we have seen, Eirene became increasingly powerful. I would suggest Alexios's rather strange behaviour after his recovery from illness was intended as as a way of isolating Eirene from the administration at Constantinople. This might be particularly urgent if the new logothete of the *sekreta* was indeed her nephew as Paul Magdalino supposes.[31] We know that, if this was Alexios's intention, he failed. When he finally returned to Constantinople in the autumn of 1115, he allowed his empress a dominant role and his son-in law Nikephoros Bryennios was put in charge of the government. According to Zonaras he gave judgement and legislated as though he was emperor (βασιλικῶς).[32] It would seem that he had acquired powers similar to those previously accorded to Anna Dalassene. This did not please John Komnenos one bit. He seemed to be losing out in the struggle for the succession to his sister Anna Komnene, whom Zonaras singles out as the driving force behind Bryennios.[33]

The struggle over the succession dominated the last part of Alexios's reign. It was out in the open from at least 1112, but it seems to have begun earlier than this and to have been connected

[30] *Al.*, XII.iii.2-8, L, III, 60-63, S, 374-378.
[31] See above, 153-155.
[32] Zonaras, XVIII.26.14, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 754.6-10.
[33] Zonaras, XVIII.26.15, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 754-755.

with the growing ascendancy of Eirene Doukaina. The reasons she had for opposing the succession of her eldest son never became clear. One can only suppose that she was upholding the Doukas interest in the imperial office, which had been reinforced by Anna Komnene's betrothal to Constantine Doukas, the porphyrogenitan heir of Michael VII Doukas. Alexios's failure to act decisively over the succession appears to confirm that he was indeed 'faible devant les femmes'. Barbara Hill disputes this on the grounds that Eirene Doukaina failed in the end to get her own way and that John Komnenos secured the throne.[34] She is certainly correct that following the accession of John II Komnenos women became less prominent at the Byzantine court. But this was his doing rather than his father's. John understood the problem only too well. He had nearly been deprived of the imperial office through the action of women. His father, on the other hand, had cause to be grateful to women of the imperial family, who had helped him obtain imperial office. Alexios grew up at a time when the succession went more often that not with the hand of a woman. His marriage to Eirene Doukaina enhanced his claims to imperial legitimacy, though he was careful to be crowned separately. This was almost certainly a precaution suggested by Anna Dalassene, who wished to protect the Komnenian interest in the imperial office.

Anna Dalassene played a vital part in maintaining her son in power: she exercised control over the machinery of government and preserved the cohesion and harmony of the ruling family. These were the chief ingredients of Komnenian rule, which consisted of the application of aristocratic principles to imperial government. There was no absolute reason why this central role should belong to a woman, though it was in a sense an extension of the powers that a wife or a mother exercised over the management of an aristocratic household. This was very much Eirene Doukaina's style. Zonaras noted that Alexios was inhibited by her formidable presence: 'she possessed a sharp and imperious tongue and was quick to reprimand the slightest insolence'.[35] After the death of his mother it was natural that Alexios should turn to his

[34] See above, 37-54.

[35] Zonaras, XVIII.29.18, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 766. 1-3.

empress for support. He had little interest in (or perhaps aptitude for) the running of government. After his illness in 1112 he attempted to take over the reins of government. He established himself outside Constantinople at the Philopation and at an appointed hour was available to receive petitions.[36] This was the style of a field commander rather than an emperor. He soon gave this up and retreated to Mt Papikion. He preferred to leave the details of justice and administration to others, whence his reliance on the women of his family. Unfortunately, the dynastic ambitions of his empress undermined the unity of the royal family. We know that she could count on the support of one of her sons, Andronikos—Anna Komnene's favourite brother—while her youngest son Isaac favoured John Komnenos.[37] The new generation of Komnenoi were divided by the question of succession. Alexios did his best to minimise the split, but his efforts to assert himself became increasingly feeble. In the end, he handed over the reins of power to his empress and his son-in-law. The imperial family had become an instrument of government. Under Anna Dalassene it had functioned effectively. In his last years Alexios had to confront its disadvantages. The succession struggle brought out into the open some of the weaknesses of the Komnenian settlement. Divisions within the imperial family hampered the effective exercise of imperial authority, whence the muted quality of Alexios's last years.

Alexios did what he could, no doubt, to support his son, but in his last years he appears weak and indecisive. He was in a false position. He had reigned too long. He had to confront the contradictions of his achievements. The Crusade brought more entanglements than concrete results. It had not solved the problem of the Turkish presence in Anatolia. His last campaign against the Turks in 1116 was an admission of failure. He created a frontier zone around Bithynian Olympos and evacuated as much of the Greek population of the interior as was willing to follow him. But most of all, he was caught between the system of family government he had installed and a traditional view of imperial dignity.

[36] Zonaras, XVIII.26.5, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 753. 1-2.

[37] Zonaras, XVIII.24,25-26, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 748-749; *Al.*, XV.v.4, L, III, 205-206, S, 485.

The credit for the reassertion of imperial authority must lie with John Komnenos rather than his father. For Zonaras the last years of Alexios's reign provided proof of the limitations of his achievements. Anna Komnene provides a more positive appreciation of her father, but only at the cost of a deliberately misleading treatment of her father's last years. The weaknesses which Zonaras detected were fundamental and left Alexios's successors with very difficult choices.[38]

The death of Alexios

Zonaras provides a careful account of Alexios's death. It is rather different from that provided in the *Alexiad*.[39] It might almost be seen that Zonaras was attempting to set the record straight. At the very least, his version of events underlines the tendentious character of Anna Komnene's account. Zonaras had access to various sources, including the Emperor John II Komnenos.[40] His outline of events is clear. John Komnenos made for the Mangana palace, where his father was being nursed. He wanted to check on his father's health. Aware that he was close to death, he hurried away and collected his supporters. His intention was to seize the Great Palace, but his first attempt was frustrated by the Varangian Guard. He therefore crossed the Augoustaion to Hagia Sophia where he was acclaimed emperor by the clergy of Hagia Sophia with patriarchal approval. The Varangians now allowed John Komnenos entry into the Great Palace.[41] In later years John Komnenos claimed that his coup had been carried out with his father's backing. He insisted that his father had given him a ring as a sign of his approval, when his mother was not looking![42] Zonaras, however, refuses to pronounce whether or not John Komnenos re-

[38] Cf. P. Magdalino, *The empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143-1180* (Cambridge, 1993), 489-493.
[39] M. Mullett, 'Alexios I Komnenos and imperial renewal', in *New Constantines. The rhythm of imperial renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th centuries*, ed. P. Magdalino (SPBS, 2, Aldershot, 1994), 263-264.
[40] Zonaras, XVIII.26.1, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 762.10-11.
[41] Zonaras, XVIII.28.15, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 761-764.
[42] Zonaras, XVIII.28.21, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 762.12-14.

ceived the blessing of his father.[43] The *Mousai* of Alexios I Komnenos may resolve the problem, for they appear to show that the old emperor supported and worked for the succession of his son John Komnenos—'a father's prayers brought to perfect fruition'.[44] The author of the preface of the *Mousai* tells us that he secretly passed on the dying emperor's advice in the shape of the *Mousai* to his son and heir John Komnenos.[45] In other words, the *Mousai* contain Alexios's sentiments but in a ghosted form. They are in Margaret Mullett's words, 'a curious mixture of general timeless advice and specific references to events of the reign of Alexios'.[46] The Emperor details his triumphs over the enemies of Byzantium.[47] This was in an effort both to justify his rule and to provide his son with practical guidance on the dangers he would face. It is clear that Alexios took pride in his military prowess. But practical advice went further than the this. His son was to deal harshly with dishonest provincial governors;[48] he was to select his advisors carefully. It did not matter if they were young as long as they were sound.[49] Not a word is said about the need to rely on members of the imperial family. The stress was on the imperial office. Alexios recognised that though it might pass to a woman or an infant, ruling properly required a man of judgement.[50] This can perhaps be taken as an oblique reference to the succession struggle and as an indication of where Alexios stood.

The ideas set out in the *Mousai* are highly conventional. Alexios stresses the importance of ruling in accordance with the laws and of ensuring respect for the laws.[51] He warns against any innovation in government.[52] His emphasis is on the need of the holder of the

[43] Zonaras, XVIII.28.19, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 762.2-3.
[44] *Mousai*, II, 48.
[45] *Mousai*, I, 35-53.
[46] Mullett, 'Alexios I Komnenos and imperial renewal', 265.
[47] *Mousai*, I, 283-300.
[48] *Mousai*, I,. 372-385.
[49] *Mousai*, I, 71-89.
[50] *Mousai*, I, 133-139.
[51] *Mousai*, I, 150-153.
[52] *Mousai*, I, 98-100.

imperial office to cultivate virtue (*arete*).[53] This will arm him against the enemies that beset him round, at home and abroad. Overshadowing all was the Last Judgement, which Alexios faced with dread.[54] Alexios is simply repeating the maxims he was supposed to have received from St Cyril Phileotes, a holy man he visited on two occasions. He was told, for example, that it was not the symbols of office that distinguished the true ruler, but imperial virtue.[55] Alexios in his turn warned his son not to be deceived by the trappings of the imperial office. It was virtue that entitled him to wear the red sandals.[56] The *Mousai* are informed by a distinctly monastic outlook.

Alexios confessed to Cyril Phileotes how much he depended upon the support and prayers of monks. In gratitude he made donations to various monasteries.[57] Other monastic founders and leaders of his time were also recipients of his generosity. Alexios displayed an abiding concern for the well-being of monasticism.[58] But his refoundation of the *Orphanotropheion* became the major object of his energies and funds. It was applauded by Cyril Phileotes. It made him the equal of the apostles.[59] Its spiritual value may have been even greater than that accruing from the foundation of a monastery. Alexios did after all attach a nunnery to the *Orphanotropheion*.[60]

Alexios was probably content to leave the foundation of monasteries and convents to the women of his family. They were the experts. They seem to have determined the pious ordering of court

[53] *Mousai*, I, 254.

[54] *Mousai*, I, 114-118; 124-125;.225-238.

[55] Nicholas Kataskepenos, *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία καὶ μερικὴ θαυμάτων διήγησις τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Κυρίλλου τοῦ Φιλεώτου*, ch. 47.6, ed. E. Sargologos, *La vie de Saint Cyrille le Philéote, moine byzantin (†1110)* (SubsHag, 39, Brussels, 1964), 230.21-22.

[56] *Mousai*, I, 140-143; 163-164.

[57] *VCyril*, ch. 47. 11-12, ed. Sargologos, 233-234.

[58] R. Morris, *Monks and laymen in Byzantium, 843-1118* (Cambridge, 1995), ch. 10, 267-295; M.J. Angold, *Church and society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081-1261* (Cambridge, 1995), 275-285.

[59] *VCyril*, ch. 47. 6, ed. Sargologos, 230.21-22.

[60] *Al.*, XV.vii.1-4, L, III, 217.16-21, S, 494-495.

life which was reminiscent of a monastery.[61] Both Anna Dalassene and Eirene Doukaina kept abreast of the latest developments in monastic piety. Recent work has pointed to the monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis as one of the centres of monastic renewal in Constantinople. Its *typikon* was extraordinarily influential. It provided a model for the *typikon* which Eirene Doukaina drew up for her own foundation of the Theotokos Kecharitomene.[62]

In any case, Alexios was more interested in exercising a general supervision over monastic foundations and over the activities of monastic founders. This is apparent from the way he dealt with *charistike* and from the concern he displayed over the work of a Christodoulos, of a Cyril Phileotes, of a Meletios, or of a bishop of Strumitsa; a concern that also extended to the Holy Mountain. A supervisory role of this kind was part of the general responsibility that an emperor had for the well-being of the church. This Alexios took very seriously. He may have shown little interest in the details of administration, preferring to leave them to others, but ecclesiastical affairs were a different matter. He intervened in a whole range of ecclesiastical business: heresy; the privileges of the clergy of Hagia Sophia; the ranking of the metropolitan sees; the regulation of lay patronage to monasteries; marriage law and the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts.[63] The relationship of the emperor to the church was a major problem facing Alexios when he came to power. In the course of the eleventh century a series of powerful patriarchs had been able to extend the range of their effective power; they had on occasion acted as arbiters of the political process. The balance of constitutional power was tilting towards the church. Nikephoros Botaneiates even sought ecclesiastical sanctions for his legislation.[64] One of Alexios's major achievements was to recover the initiative in his dealings with the church. He did this by emphasising his role as the defender of orthodoxy and by reasserting his right to intervene in ecclesiastical affairs.

[61] *Al.*, III. viii. 1-4;V, ix, 3, L I, 125-126, II, 38,2-20, S120-121.

[62] *The Theotokos Evergetis and eleventh-century monasticism*, ed. M. Mullett and A. Kirby (BBTT, 6.1, Belfast, 1994), esp. 215-273.

[63] Angold, *Church and society*, 45-72, 265-285.

[64] M.J. Angold, 'Imperial renewal and Orthodox reaction: Byzantium in the eleventh century', in *New Constantines*, 246-257.

Heresy excepted, Anna Komnene and Zonaras pay little or no attention to Alexios's church settlement. Its importance only became fully apparent in the latter part of Manuel I Komnenos's reign, when great stress was placed on the emperor's role as the *epistemonarches*—or disciplinarian—of the church.[65] At one level it gave the emperor caesaropapist powers, but at another it left the emperor beholden to the church because imperial authority depended more than ever on ecclesiastical approval for its justification. Alexios never used the title *epistemonarches*, but he exercised a supervisory role in ecclesiastical affairs. The key document is Alexios's edict of 1107. His justification for intervention was that the church was in danger. The cause was long-term sloth and negligence which encouraged the spread of heresy.[66] The solution was to spread the word of God through preaching. It was a theme he broached in the *Mousai*. He advised his son to learn from St Paul and to teach his subjects by example.[67] Alexios proposed to establish an order of preachers attached to Hagia Sophia. At first sight, this would seem to be a blatant infringement of patriarchal authority. But it was not as straightforward as this. As Paul Magdalino points out, in his edict Alexios appeared to be taking credit for a measure taken some years before by the patriarch Nicholas Grammatikos.[68] The edict is silent about the patriarch's contribution. It is a good example of the emperor exercising his supervisory role in ecclesiastical affairs. This often consisted of Alexios giving his formal approval to existing measures and practices, in a way suggesting that they were due to his initiative. It was justified in terms of the defence of orthodoxy, but it also underpinned the ascendancy that the emperor now enjoyed over the church.

The tone of the edict is disparaging and critical. The patriarch and the episcopal bench had been found wanting. Paul Gautier,

[65] See P. Magdalino, *Manuel I Komnenos*, 267-315.

[66] Νεαρὰ νομοθεσία τοῦ βασιλέως κυροῦ Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ διατυποῦσα τὰ περὶ τῶν ψήφων καὶ ὁποίους δεῖ εἶναι τοὺς πανταχοῦ ἀρχιερεῖς, πρὸς δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἱερεῖς ἐν ταῖς ἐπαρχίαις καὶ ταῖς μητροπόλεσι καὶ ταῖς ἐπισκοπαῖς, ed. P. Gautier, 'L'édit d'Alexis Ier Comnène sur la réforme du clergé', *REB*, 31 (1073), 179.12-24.

[67] *Mousai*, I, 239-253.

[68] See above, 214-215.

the most recent editor of the edict, detects monastic inspiration behind its grandiloquent tone and weighty style,[69] but it goes further than this. Alexios was surveying the condition of church and society from a monastic standpoint. Inseparable from this was criticism of moral failings such as sloth and negligence. The ideal espoused by Alexios was monastic. Moral failings could only be corrected through the mystery of piety (*eusebeia*). This was instilled by the message of the apostles and the dedication of holy men. It made possible an approach to the true Christ.[70] So far so conventional! Much less expected is the emperor's stress on the humiliation of Christ. He was convinced that 'God had intervened in the matter and approved the correction of evil, for He has now so humiliated (ἐταπείνωσεν) Himself that He begs us, as it were, on behalf of His flock, for which He became man and suffered in the flesh and spilt His own blood and suffered an ignominous death'.[71] These were thoughts inspired by a new monastic fashion which placed special emphasis on the sufferings of Christ. It produced around this time a series of new iconographies, the most famous of which is the Man of Sorrows (*Akra Tapeinôsis*).[72] A monk who attended Alexios during one of his illnesses was struck by his Christlike humility.[73] Deliberately or not Alexios became an exemplar of the monastic piety of his age.

Humility was central to his sense of piety, but Alexios had learnt that humiliation had its own benefits. At the beginning of his reign he and his family did penance at the bidding of patriarch Kosmas for the damage his supporters caused in the course of his *coup d'état*.[74] He used it as an advertisement of his piety. The biting diatribes of John the Oxite against Alexios were almost certainly

[69] *Edict on the reform*, ed. Gautier, 170.

[70] *Edict on the reform*, ed. Gautier, 183.60-84.

[71] *Edict on the reform*, ed. Gautier, 197.294-298.

[72] H. Belting, 'An image and its function in the liturgy: the Man of Sorrows in Byzantium', *DOP*, 34-35 (1980-1981), 1-16.

[73] *VCyril*, ch.47.13, ed. Sargologos, 235.12.

[74] *Alexiad*, III,v,1-6, L, I, 116-119, S, 113-115.

commissioned by the emperor himself.[75] The council of the Blachernai of 1094 became an elaborate apology for the seizure of church treasures. It was a means chosen by Alexios himself to effect a reconciliation with his opponents within the church.[76] Alexios's humility was equally in evidence as he attended the deathbed of patriarch Nicholas Grammatikos. He sought the dying patriarch's blessing.[77]

The emperor was conscious that he was a sinner, unworthy of the great responsibilities imposed upon him.[78] The terrors of the Last Judgement were very real. In this he had much in common with his first commander-in-chief Gregory Pakourianos. The *typikon* the latter drew up for the monastery of Bačkovo is informed by his fear of hellfire and a wish to atone for his sins.[79] Nor was Alexios's piety so very much different from that of Kekaumenos.[80] As Jonathan Shepard has so rightly observed,[81] Alexios's style was that of a field commander with few pretensions and seldom standing on his dignity. This is how Zonaras describes him:

> He was a man...neither disdainful and arrogant nor quick to anger. Nor was he particularly avaricious nor a slave to money. [He was not the kind of person who] likes to hoard it , so that he possesses hidden treasures and caches of money. When he died not much was to be found in the treasury. He was inclined to mercy and was not vindictive; in manner modest and easily approachable. He ate in moderation and did not over-imbibe. He paid attention to men of virtue (i.e. monks) and gave them due honour. He did not appreciate learning as much as he should

[75] P. Gautier, 'Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite contre Alexis Ier Comnène', *REB*, 28 (1970), 27.30-34; cf. above, Mullett, 391; Angold, *Church and society*, 65-67; Morris, *Monks and laymen*, 268.

[76] See above, 350.

[77] Meyer, *Haupturkunden*, 177-178.

[78] *VCyril*, ch. 47.1-3, ed. Sargologos, 225-228.

[79] *PakourianosTyp*, *Τὸ τυπικὸν τὸ ἐκτεθὲν παρὰ τοῦ μεγάλου δομεστίκου τῆς δύσεως κυροῦ Γρηγορίου τοῦ Πακουριανοῦ πρὸς τὴν παρ' αὐτοῦ κτισθεῖσαν μονὴν τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς Πετριτζιωτίσσης*, ed. P. Gautier, 'Le *typikon* du sébaste Grégoire Pakourianos', *REB*, 42 (1984), 28-35.

[80] Cf. Magdalino, '*Kaiserkritik*', 333.

[81] See above, 92-98.

> have, but he did appreciate it. He was fair-minded and well disposed to those around him, often treating them almost as equals.[82]

Zonaras could not help adding 'especially when the empress was not around'.[83] This is a surprisingly complimentary portrait of an emperor, given how critical Zonaras is of his innovations in government. He covered himself by emphasising that admirable as these qualities may have been in a private individual they did not befit an emperor. It was a way of underlining that Alexios introduced a more personal style of kingship. This has already become apparent from his stress on piety and humility as the necessary virtues for a ruler.

This may explain why he was such a reluctant patron of the arts and literature. Patronage of this kind was a traditional way in which an emperor could assert himself. The great patrons among the Byzantine emperors almost always espoused a programme of *renovatio*. The Komnenoi were different: they were reacting to the style of court life symbolised for them by Constantine Monomachos.[84] Lavish patronage of the arts and scholarship was to be eschewed. It fits very well with Alexios's style of kingship and cast of mind that he should have had a depiction of the Last Judgement set up in the Great Palace. It was, as Paul Magdalino reminds us, in the 'tradition of religious rather than imperial iconography'.[85] Alexios's major literary commission was the *Panoplia Dogmatike* of Euthymios Zigabenos.[86] This was symptomatic of his lack of interest in *renovatio*, as traditionally understood.[87] His intention was to enhance the spiritual quality of imperial authority. This could best be done by embracing the monastic piety of his time and by taking responsibility for the well-being of the church.

[82] Zonaras, XVIII.29.15-16, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 765.5-17.

[83] Zonaras, XVIII.29.15, ed. Büttner-Wobst, III, 765-766.

[84] *Al.*, III. viii. 2, L, I, 125.22-26, S, 120.

[85] P. Magdalino and R. Nelson, 'The emperor in Byzantine art of the twelfth century', *ByzForsch*, 8 (1982), 124-125.

[86] *Al.*, XV. ix. 1, L, III, 223.18-31, S,500; see above, 373-376.

[87] See above, 204-205, cf. Mullett, 'Alexios I Komnenos and imperial revival', 259-267.

Although he never officially styled himself *epistemonarches* of the church, this is what he effectively became. The notion of the emperor as the regulator of ecclesiastical affairs was central to the system of government developed under the Komnenoi. Such an understanding of the role of an emperor had always been implicit in Byzantine theories of kingship, but it had normally been subordinated to that of an emperor as legislator and ruler. Alexios changed the emphasis.

Alexios was a man of action. He did not possess any clear programme. He told his son that actions could speak louder than words. He was dismissive of rhetorical culture.[88] He was not of a reflective disposition. He may well have seen no incompatibility between his reliance on his family and the traditional exercises of imperial authority. It was sufficient that he was the defender of orthodoxy. This was the *leitmotif* of his reign. It served instead of any programme of *renovatio*. The paradox was that he laid the foundations of a new system of government. In typical Byzantine fashion this was very largely a matter of expedients designed to meet a series of crises. There was no thought about systematic reform. Alexios knew how to react to events, but he was no statesman or reformer, hence the difficulty modern historians have had in assessing his achievement. He undoubtedly rescued the empire from a period of crisis. But he lived long enough to see the limitations of his achievements. The support of the imperial family would give way to a bitter succession struggle, which he was unable to master. His failure was marked by recourse to expedients associated with the Doukas emperors. His solution to the problem of the succession was to make provision for his empress to act as regent for his son and heir; thus reviving the discredited device of Constantine X Doukas. Equally, when his religious advisor Eustratios of Nicaea was accused of heresy, he followed the precedent set by Michael VII Doukas over John Italos. He advised Eustratios to submit his views to Synod in the expectation that he would be absolved.[89] Eustratios's condemnation in 1117 challenged Alexios's

[88] *Mouṣai*, I, 90-97, but see Mullett, above, 362.

[89] M.J. Angold, *The Byzantine empire. A political history 1025-1204* (London, 1984), 150-151; Angold, *Church and society*, 173-175.

ascendancy over the church. Finally, Alexios's masterstroke had been his appeal to the papacy for military aid. By the end of his reign it was clear that it had brought Byzantium relatively little in terms of territorial gain and much in the way of potential danger.

Abbreviations

AASS: Acta Sanctorum (Brussels, 1643–)

Adler, *Benjamin of Tudela*: M.N. Adler, *The itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela* (London, 1907)

Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer*: H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIe-XVe siècles* (Paris, 1966)

Ainsworth, *Travels and researches*: W.F. Ainsworth, *Travels and researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Chaldia and Armenia*, 2 vols (London, 1842)

Al.: Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols (Paris, 1937-1945); tr. E.R.A. Sewter (Harmondsworth, 1988)

Albert, *Historia Hierosolymitana*: Albert of Aix, *Liber christianae expeditionis pro ereptione, emundatione et restitutione sanctae Hieroslymitanae ecclesiae*, RHO (Paris, 1879), IV, 263-713

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Alexiou, Διγενής (1990): S. Alexiou, *Βασίλειος Διγενής Ἀκρίτης καί τά ἄσματα τοῦ Ἀρμούρη καί τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Ἀνδρονίκου* (Athens, 1990)

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AnalBoll: *Analecta Bollandiana* (Paris, Brussels and Geneva, 1882–)

AnatSt: *Anatolian Studies* (London, 1950–)

Angold, *Byzantine Empire*: M. Angold, *The Byzantine empire 1025-1204: a political history* (London, 1984)

Angold, Church and society: M.J. Angold, *Church and society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081-1261* (Cambridge, 1995)

AOC: *Archives de l'orient chrétien* (Bucharest, 1948–)

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Barzos, *Γενεαλογία Κομνηνῶν*: K. Barzos, *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, 2 vols (Thessalonike, 1984)

B: *Byzantion* (Brussels, 1924–)

BAR Int. Ser.: British Archaeological Reports International Series

BBTT: Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations (Belfast, 1991–)

BBOM: Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Monographs (Aldershot, 1996-)

Digenes Akrites, ed. Beaton and Ricks: R.Beaton and D. Ricks, *Digenes Akrites: new approaches to Byzantine heroic poetry* (KCL, 2, Aldershot, 1993)

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Bernold of St Blaise, *Chronicon:* Bernold of St Blaise, *Chronicon, MGH, SS*, V (Hanover, 1844)

BHG: *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca*, ed. F. Halkin (Brussels, 1957)

BJRL: *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* (Manchester, 1972–)

BMGS: *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* (Oxford, 1975-1983; Birmingham, 1984–)

BNJ: *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher* (Athens, 1920–)

Brand, 'Turkish element': C.M. Brand, 'The Turkish element in Byzantium, eleventh-twelfth centuries', *DOP*, 43 (1989), 1-25

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BS: *Byzantinoslavica* (Prague, 1929–)

Burgman, *Ecloga*: *Ecloga. Das Gesetzbuch Leons III und Konstantinos V*, ed. L. Burgmann (Frankfurt, 1983)

Byz et NeohellNap: Byzantina et Neo-Hellenica Neapolitana

ByzForsch: *Byzantinische Forschungen* (Amsterdam, 1966–)

ByzSorb: Byzantina Sorbonensia (Paris, 1975–)

BZ: *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* (Leipzig/Munich, 1892–)

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Cameron, *Mediterranean world*: A. Cameron, *The Mediterranean world in late antiquity, AD 395 – 600* (London, 1993)

CFHB: Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae (Washington, 1967–,Berlin, 1967–, Vienna, 1975–, Rome, 1975–, Brussels, 1975–)

Chalandon, *Domination normande*: F. Chalandon, *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile* (Paris, 1907)

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CSHB: Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, 50 vols, (Bonn, 1828-1897)

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DOP: Dumbarton Oaks Papers (Washington, DC, 1941–)

DOS: Dumbarton Oaks Studies (Washington, DC, 1951–)

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EO: Échos d'Orient (Paris, Constantinople and Bucharest, 1898-1943)

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IRAIK: *Isvestija Russkogo Arheologičeskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole* (Odessa and Sofia, 1896-1912)

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JRA: *Journal of Roman Archaeology* (Ann Arbor, 1988–)

JÖB: *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* (Vienna, 1950–)

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